Translated by
Barbara
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Miller

BHARTRIHARI:
poems

With the
Transliterated
Sanskrit Text
of the
Śatakatrayam

SHOUT
SHARE
IT

For an instant he is a child,
For an instant a youth delighting in passion,
For an instant he is a pauper,
For an instant fat in prosperity.
Then, like an actor,
With withered limbs of old age,
His body covered with wrinkles,
A man at the end of his worldly existence
Falls at the curtain to death.

Bhartrihari

Foreword

The *Bhartrihari* is one of the Translations from the Oriental Classics by which the Committee on Oriental Studies has sought to transmit to Western readers representative works of the major Asian traditions in thought and literature. These are works which in our judgment any educated man should have read. Frequently, however, this reading has been denied him by the lack of suitable translations. All too often he has had to choose between excerpts in popular anthologies on the one hand, and on the other heavily annotated translations intended primarily for the specialist, which in many cases are out of date or out of print. Here we offer translations of whole works, based on scholarly studies, but written for the general reader rather than the specialist.

Though Indian literature is remarkable for its range and variety, it has been best known in the West for its great works of religion and philosophy, as well as for its epic and drama which express the lofty, world-transcending ideals of the high tradition in Sanskrit: on the other hand, readers have not been aware of a secular literature which celebrated profane love, the life of the senses, and the acquisition of material goods for personal enjoyment. Most often these two worlds have seemed quite disconnected. It was difficult to conceive of a people at once so worldly and so world-renouncing.

The poetry attributed to Bhartrihari does so conceive of people, but reveals also the conflict they experience between a

profound attraction to sensual beauty and the yearning for liberation from it. In a classic style and refined language, Bhartrihari shows how creative the tension between these opposing lives could be. And not in these lives alone—for they help us to understand how most great Indian art could be at once so sensuous and so spiritual.

Wm. Theodore de Bary

Acknowledgments

The present translation is based on the text of Bhartrihari's *Śatakatrayam* critically edited by D. D. Kosambi in the Singhi Jain Series, No. 23, entitled *The Epigrams Attributed to Bhartrihari* (Bombay, 1948). In preparing the translation, I have made use of Kosambi's critical apparatus as well as the commentary of Rāmachandra Budhendra and the prose translations of the *Nītiśataka* and *Vairāgyaśataka* of both M. R. Kale and B. H. Wortham. I have also been helped greatly by the suggestions of Professor Royal Weiler.

I wish to thank Professor Weiler for introducing me to Bhartrihari and for encouraging me to undertake this translation. I also thank Professor W. Norman Brown for his patient and valuable criticism; Professor Ainslie Embree for his lasting interest in the project; Dr. K. M. Munshi, President of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, for permission to use in transliteration portions of D. D. Kosambi's edition of *The Epigrams*; and Marjorie Weiler for typing the transliterated Sanskrit text. Finally I thank my husband, James, and my friends for their criticisms of the English renderings.

Barbara Stoler Miller

New York, 1966

Contents

Foreword, by Wm. Theodore de Bary vii
Acknowledgments ix
A Note on Sanskrit Pronunciation xiii
Introduction xv

Poems (Śatakatrayam) 2
Man in the World of Villains and Kings (Nīti Śataka) 8
Passionate Encounters (Śriñgāra Śataka) 60
Refuge in the Forest (Vairāgya Śataka) 108

Glossary of Sanskrit Names and Terms in the Translation 149
Bibliography 153

A Note on Sanskrit Pronunciation

In reading Sanskrit words, the accent is usually placed on the penultimate syllable when this is long; otherwise it is placed on the antepenultimate. A syllable is long if it contains a long vowel (*ā*, *ī*, *ū*), a diphthong (*e*, *o*, *ai*, *au*), or a vowel followed by more than one consonant. It should be noted that the aspirated consonants *kh*, *gh*, *ch*, *jh*, *th*, *dh*, *ph*, *bh*, etc. are considered single consonants in the Sanskrit alphabet.

Vowels are given their full value, as in Italian or German:

a	as *u* in c*u*t
ā	as *a* in f*a*ther
i	as *i* in p*i*t
ī	as *i* in mach*i*ne
u	as *u* in p*u*t
ū	as *u* in r*u*le
ri (ṛ)	a short vowel; as *ri* in *ri*ver
e	as *ay* in s*ay*
ai	as *ai* in *ai*sle
o	as *o* in g*o*
au	as *ow* in c*ow*
ṁ	nasalizes and lengthens the preceding vowel
ḥ	a rough breathing, replacing an original *s* or *r*; lengthens the preceding vowel and occurs only at the end of a syllable or word

Most consonants are analogous to the English, if the distinction between aspirated and nonaspirated consonants is

observed; e.g., the aspirated consonants *th* and *ph* must never be pronounced as in English *th*in and *ph*ial, but as in ho*th*ouse and she*ph*erd. (Similarly, *kh*, *gh*, *ch*, *jh*, *dh*, *bh*.) The differences between the Sanskrit "cerebral" *ṭ*, *ṭh*, *ḍ*, *ḍh*, *ṇ* and "dental" *t*, *th*, *d*, *dh*, *n* are another distinctive feature of the language.

Note also:

g	as *g* in *g*oat
n̄	as *n* in i*n*k, or si*n*g
c	as *ch* in *ch*urch
ñ	as *ñ* in se*ñ*or (Spanish)
ś, *ṣ*	as *sh* in *sh*ape or *s* in *s*ugar

Introduction

The *Śatakatrayam* is the rich collection of Sanskrit lyric and gnomic poetry attributed by Indian tradition to the authorship of Bhartrihari. It is divided into three sections, each dealing with a different aspect of the poet's life: the *Nītiśataka* expresses his worldly concerns and ideals; the *Śriñgāraśataka* evokes his erotic moods and analyzes the nature of passion; the *Vairāgyaśataka* reflects his disillusionment with the world and his thoughts on renunciation. The verses are real; the author himself is a historical phantom, elusive both because of a lack of biographical material and because the collection has suffered centuries of inflation. It is impossible to reconstruct an "original text," but on the basis of extensive manuscript material examined for the preparation of his critical edition of the *Śatakatrayam*, D. D. Kosambi observed "the remarkable fact that, in spite of the extraordinary variation from version to version, the total impression produced by any of them is about the same. A certain type of stanza came to be attracted to the collection . . . the seeds must necessarily have been present in the original collection to permit such growth."*

* D. D. Kosambi, *Bhartṛhari-viracitaḥ Śatakatrayādi-subhāṣitasaṁgrahaḥ* (The epigrams attributed to Bhartrihari) (Bombay, 1948), p. 81. This critical edition is the source for my work: the present translation includes verses 1–200, those "stanzas generally found in all versions" of the Bhartrihari collection. (I have also given in this Introduction, and as an epigraph, translations of several "suspect" verses—224, 235, 311, 317—which are, however, popular and interesting.) Since the sequence of the verses and the readings vary greatly from version to version, I have adopted Kosambi's order as well as most of his readings.

The group of 200 stanzas which Kosambi concludes to be the most authentic by the criteria of textual criticism do echo a tone of irony, skepticism, and discontent distinctive enough to owe their origin to one author. We call him Bhartrihari, but this is meant to refer to a literary personality revealed in the *Śatakatrayam*, not necessarily to a historical man. Who Bhartrihari was and when he lived is conjecture. The oldest preserved version of the *Śatakatrayam* text took form in the eleventh or twelfth century, but the Bhartrihari collection probably existed in an amorphous state long before this. Some clue may be taken from the report of the Chinese pilgrim I-ching. In his *Record of the Buddhist Religion* he writes that a grammarian named Bhartrihari, author of the *Vākyapadīya* and another work which "treats of the principles of human life as well as of grammatical science," died in A.D. 650. He was renowned for his vacillation between the Buddhist monkhood and a life of secular pleasure and is also said to have composed stanzas on this subject. Though the verses of the *Śatakatrayam* as such have no apparent relation to Bhartrihari the grammarian, the account of I-ching is relevant. It suggests that at the time I-ching traveled in India (A.D. 671–695) a Bhartrihari, the author of verses which expressed life's multiple attractions, was already a legendary figure in India. A confusion between the legendary poet and the grammarian by I-ching is possible—if the two were not in fact the same person.

In popular Indian tradition Bhartrihari is identified as a king who was discouraged by the inconstancy of women and driven to renounce the world. The legend, recorded in the *Vikramacarita*, says that a brahman priest who had obtained a fruit of immortality decided to give it to his king, Bhartrihari. But the king relinquished it to his beloved queen, who gave it to her paramour, who in his turn gave it to one of his mistresses, and she presented it again to the king. After reflecting for a time on this chain of events, the king cursed all women and retired

to the forest. A single verse, a late addition to the Bhartrihari collection, is associated with this legend:

> She who is the constant object of my thought
> Is indifferent to me,
> Is desirous of another man,
> Who in his turn adores some other woman,
> But this woman takes delight in me . . .
> Damn her! Damn him! The God of Love!
> The other woman! And myself! [311]

In spite of the legend, the content of the verses suggests that the author of the *Śatakas* was not a king, but a courtier-poet in the service of a king. There is frequent reference to the degradation of life in the service of a king and to the strained relationship between king and counselor (verses 13, 35, 58, 59, 60, 86, 163, 165, 166). Bhartrihari is acutely sensitive to the poet's poverty and his failure in a cruel materialistic society.

Bhartrihari's are not the thoughts of a young man; he meanders, lingers nostalgically over trivial scenes, laments his wasted vigor and the tragedy of old age. He describes youthful women with the self-conscious lust of a lover who is past the age when attractions are mutual. He attempts to console himself with the assurance that his poetic art and wisdom are immortal, but he cannot escape the feeling that he has spent his youth in vain and all that remains of his life is an overpowering greed. Compelled by his strong sense of personal irony, Bhartrihari sees man's paradoxical position in a transient, seductive world:

> A man, licked by the poisonous flames
> Of passion's insuperable serpentine arrow,
> Mocked at by the God of Love, can neither
> Savor nor escape from the world of the senses. [224c–d]

Critics of Sanskrit literature, such as the British scholar A. B. Keith, have stressed the impersonality of Sanskrit poetry.

Keith finds no revelation of personal character in the poems, and when he compares the poets to Sappho, Lucretius, and Catullus, he finds them wanting in vividness. He says of Sanskrit poets:

> They live moreover in a world of tranquil calm, not in the sense that sorrow and suffering are unknown, but in the sense that there prevails a rational order in the world which is the outcome not of blind chance but of the actions of man in previous births. Discontent with the constitution of the universe, rebellion against its decrees, are incompatible with the serenity engendered by this recognition by all the Brahmanical poets of the rationality of the world order. Hence we can trace no echo of social discontent; the poets were courtiers who saw nothing whatever unsatisfactory in the life around them. . . .*

But even if we found that every other Sanskrit poet conformed to the stereotype, Bhartrihari would defy the mold.

> In India the life of a man is circumscribed by four legitimate pursuits: *dharma* (righteousness, learning, and religious life), *artha* (material gain), *kāma* (pleasure, esp. erotic), and *mokṣa* (the rejection of ordinary human pursuits, the renunciation of worldly activities in order to devote one's energies to the task of escaping mundane bondage). Bhartrihari's verses are traditionally arranged so that the three *Śatakas* concentrate on these pursuits.
>
> The *Nītiśataka*, like the popular Indian works of "good counsel" (*nītiśāstra*, including the *Pañcatantra* and *Hitopadeśa*) comments on man's obsession with the acquisition of worldly advantage and the obstacles he encounters. Yet the tone of the *Nītiśataka* sets it apart from the didactic fables and aphorisms. Many verses reveal a lurking attachment to the world as well as a revulsion against its sordidness; there is an undercurrent

* *A History of Sanskrit Literature* (Oxford, 1928), p. 345.

of turmoil and disenchantment to Bhartrihari's concern with worldly dominion and social action. He refers repeatedly to the intoxicating power of wealth, to insatiable greed, to unruly fate, to the haughtiness of kings, to the humiliation of servitude, to the supremacy of evil men in a society where virtue is judged only in terms of its proximity to gold. All this is very painful to a man who finds frank attraction in wordly pursuits and in life at court. He would prefer to grace the summit of the world rather than to wither in the isolation of a forest retreat, but the world discourages him.

Concern with the power which greed and desire exert over man is a recurrent theme in Indian literature—Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain. Generally it is believed that desire, which is ultimately based on ignorance and delusion about the nature of things, is the source of every action—action which binds man to the suffering of continued existence in birth after birth. When Bhartrihari reflects on his own painful, perplexing position in the world of sense experience, he speaks of delusion, ignorance, desire, and bondage. The abstract terms have concrete and insidious meaning for him in man's greed for material possessions and in his passion for women.

If we see that Bhartrihari's erotic poetry expresses his subugation to the powers of desire and passion, we shall find the verses of the *Śriñgāraśataka* less frivolous than they might otherwise seem. The majority of these stanzas are not merely picturesque and delicate evocations of erotic mood. They possess depth and intensity precisely because the poet considers the confusion, longing, pain, and ephemeral pleasure of love to be at the center of human existence, implicit in any account of man's condition (e.g., verses 83, 85, 94, 100, 103, 129, 146, 147).

Woman, the object of his passion, is an enigma which defies Bhartrihari's solution. She seems to him an invitation to some kind of supraterrestrial paradise, but she is at the same

time life's device for enticing men into inescapable bondage and suffering. The delights of passionate encounter are at once beautiful and ominous; the vehemence of Bhartrihari's denunciation of woman is only a measure of the terrible fascination which she holds for him.

The seductress who is the cause of Bhartrihari's unrest is neither his wife nor a particular mistress, nor is she some idealized Beatrice; she is every woman who is young, affectionate, artful, charming, and voluptuous. His adoration of her is neither a worshipful love nor a ritual love; it is concrete passion which delights in the physical subtleties of amorous play and in the seasons which set love's moods.

Emotion is not an isolated human phenomenon. The natural world of birds, flowers, and forests in their seasonal transformations gives expressive attendance to the emotions of man. The sensuous nuances of the changing natural world are evoked in Indian poetry to convey human dispositions, to create in each verse a particular flavor (*rasa*).

The notion of *rasa* is at the heart of Sanskrit lyric poetry. *Rasa* is generally translated as "mood" or "sentiment," but it means more literally the taste or flavor of something—the *rasa* of a verse or a dramatic scene is the essential pervading flavor of a given emotional situation. The basic material of *rasa* is human emotion (*bhāva*, which Indian philosophy divides into nine categories: laughter, grief, anger, energy, fear, loathing, wonder, sexual passion, and peace). A poet attempts to distill essential qualities from the natural confusion of spontaneous emotion and to pattern these according to strict, universalizing rules of composition.

Bhartrihari expresses emotion amidst a multiplicity of sensuous qualities (colors, scents, sounds), and especially in his love poetry he tends to luxuriate in the richness which nature provides. This is not sparse poetry; the poet does not crystallize or unravel emotion. He rather tries to compress the profusion

of its qualities into a flavor, into a thick, emotion-laden atmosphere so highly controlled that the audience shares in his experience.

Erotic emotion is magical, and magic is in the cycles of the seasons as well as in women's eyes. If Kāmadeva, the god of love, has a great weapon for subjugating man in woman, in nature he has a powerful ally. The fragrances of freshly blooming flowers, breezes laden with sandalwood and rain, the sound of peacocks and cuckoos, the rays of the moon at its various phases all stimulate passion in a man. By their magic woman is transformed from a creature of flesh and bones into a beautiful siren who destroys man's reason.

Bhartrihari curses her, not because she has become bitter or repugnant for him, but because her beauty continues to lure him. He feels the distressing necessity of tearing himself away from the fetters of passion before old age overtakes him and his sensuality becomes a lecherous mockery of itself. But he is weak; he does not have the strength to renounce his erotic attachments in a world in which every movement serves to evoke both memory of some past pleasure and new longing.

Bhartrihari's bondage is complicated by his sense of the inevitability with which time ravages the life of a man in the fatal revolutions of days and seasons. When life and its pleasures are tormented by the presence of time, enjoyment is poisoned; and with the loss of his capacity for pleasure, bondage in worldly existence is insufferable.

It is accepted in Indian belief that a man's position in his present life is rigidly determined by the net balance of good and bad actions in previous lives. If he accepts this doctrine of *karma* (action), Bhartrihari should be reassured. It seems to explain the ills of life as just results of past misdeeds, and seems to make man master of his future destiny. But one's *karma* is stored infinitely; it binds one, even if to better lives, to endless

cycles of death and rebirth (*saṁsāra*). And the workings of *karma* are remote and abstract. Popular tradition pays lip-service to the doctrine of *karma* but turns to a notion of fate to provide a more ready explanation for the apparent absurdity with which *karma* expresses itself in the world. The concept of fate as it appears scattered through the *Śatakas* does not impair the validity of *karma*, it operates on a different level: fate does not have the cosmic significance that *karma* does. It is invoked to explain the irrationality and confusion of events in the life of a man in society, frustrated by the pursuit of worldly gain and concerned only with immediate results. He need not blame his own actions for his present state; he has recourse to the belief that his destiny was written on his forehead, having been traced there at the time of birth by a creator-god who acts by mere caprice.

In terms of Bhartrihari's collected verses man's life is an intricate web of conflicting moments and attractions. It is beautiful and pleasurable, but this beauty becomes bitter when he feels the weight of time and the caprice of fate upon him. His anxiety casts a gray shadow over pleasure and makes the world a prison house from which he sees no escape. Drunk with the wine of a little wealth or some passing enjoyment, a man is deluded by the world—though he experiences the transience of life, he cannot understand the real meaning of time and his own absurd position in existence. Bhartrihari shows a keen awareness for the paradox involved in enjoining a deluded man to abandon the world of his delusion. Precisely because a man is deluded he fails to comprehend the cause and cure of the anxiety he suffers. Nevertheless, renunciation remains for Bhartrihari the only way which will allow him to step outside time and sever *karma's* bonds.

The discussion of renunciation is the central subject of the third *Śataka*, the *Vairāgya*. Bhartrihari expresses longing for the

 dispassionate tranquility of the forest, where he hopes to dwell

as an ascetic on the bank of a mountain river and pass his days in spiritual meditation. As in the erotic poetry, the emotions of man are associated with the natural world; here the calm mood of the forest reflects ascetic peace. In fact, Bhartrihari effects a strange transposition of the elements of an amorous scene into a convincing description of the tranquillity of a hermit in the forest. The hermit lies calm and happy in the embrace of nature almost as a lover lies weary after love-making in the arms of his mistress (190; cf. 144).

But though the quiet beauty of sylvan nature provides an environment conducive to meditation, it cannot assure the ascetic's release from the bonds of worldly existence. In aesthetic consciousness the elements of sensuous experience are always present, no matter how transfigured. And their presence is potentially dangerous; the concentration of ascetics is threatened by woman's beauty. Even the great hermit-sages of legend (Viśvamitra and Riśyaśriñga in the *Mahābhārata*, Marīci in the *Daśakumaracarita*, divine Śiva) were enslaved by the glances of a woman's eyes.

Release is possible only by overcoming time and the other worldly categories; only when his mind is absorbed in the equanimity of ultimate reality (*brahman*) can man cross beyond the ocean of *saṁsāra*. The practice of *yoga* and the pursuit of knowledge, which is discrimination, are means of escape. In all this Bhartrihari is expressing a concern with salvation which is the motivating force behind Indian philosophy; there is little thought here that is not expressed earlier in the Upaniṣads and *Bhagavadgītā*. But there is a uniqueness in the unorthodox juxtaposition of ideas to reinforce the poet's own sense of worldly suffering and desire to escape it.

When he dwells in ignorance and is deluded by Kāma's magic, man sees the world filled with the glances of women, but when he achieves the state of dispassionate calm, his senses are disengaged and he rests in the pure vision of absolute

reality—so the scriptures say. But this is remote and the fortune of a very few men who possess the extraordinary armor of resolution. For the poet, indifference to the sensuous reality of women's eyes and falling blossoms seems impossible. The futility of the attempt is such that he cannot suppress the occasional feeling that the ascetic is a ludicrous figure (113, 146, 147). Bhartrihari expresses the emotional and aesthetic factors in human nature when he is skeptical about the possibility for salvation which tradition offers:

> Kāma, why trouble your hand with twanging your bow?
> Cuckoo, why sound your tender notes in vain?
> Damsels, enough of your glances! . . .
> So affectionate, artful, charming, sweet, and desirous.
> My thought is intent on meditation's nectar
> Tasted at the feet of moon-crested Śiva. [317]

Throughout the *Śatakatrayam*, Bhartrihari considers the relative merits of life's alternatives: submission to passion (*kāma*), worldly success (*artha*), learning and virtue (*dharma*), preparing in the forest for final release (*mokṣa*). All are separately commended, but finally all are deficient. Women and wealth breed anxiety; virtue and wisdom are rare and of little avail either in the world or in the forest; even the state of tranquillity, so arduously won, is threatened by sensuous beauty. Bhartrihari does not simply vacillate between worldly indulgence and asceticism; his confusion is more profound. He concurrently experiences delight in the fullness of the world, anxiety over its cruel transcience, and the feeling that this tension is inescapable. His ironic sense that none of life's possibilities are what they seem to be gives pattern to his irreconcilable attractions and to the *Śatakatrayam*.

The courts of ancient and medieval India delighted in eloquent speech. Words of counsel, as well as erotic and philosophical musings, were recited before the king in witty and elegant language. The grace of Bhartrihari's lyrical erotic stanzas is more obvious in translation, but the sententious and reflective epigrams are not folksy bits of wisdom in verse form. They too are dominated by strict aesthetic controls and a self-conscious idea of art.

When Bhartrihari regrets decline in the world,

> Wise men are consumed by greed,
> Kings defiled by haughty ways,
> The people suffer from ignorance.
> Eloquence is withered on my tongue, [4]

the withered eloquence (*subhāṣita*) to which he refers is his own ability to compose the polished epigrammatic speech which characterizes the verses of the *Śatakatrayam* (cf. verse 76).* The language of the poetry is Sanskrit, which means "refined" or "perfected" in contrast with the Prākrits, the "unrefined" popular dialects. The latter developed independently of the strict grammatical rules applied by Pāṇini to the language of North India in about the fourth century B.C. Sanskrit, on the other hand, was the hieratic language of the brahman priests and by the time it entered court circles in the early centuries A.D., it was regularized and artificial—highly inflected, abounding in complex constructions and elaborate vocabulary. Increasingly divorced from the processes of simpli-

* A large and varied collection of this type of poetry has recently been edited by D. D. Kosambi and V. V. Gokhale, *Subhāṣitaratnakoṣa* (*Harvard Oriental Series*, Vol. 42), Cambridge, 1957; translated by D. H. H. Ingalis, *An Anthology of Sanskrit Court Poetry* (*Harvard Oriental Series*, Vol. 44), Cambridge, 1965. Both volumes contain detailed discussions of the poetry's background and techniques. I commend them to the reader's attention.

fication to which a natural language is subject, it was learned in terms of its rules and employed mainly for official and literary purposes. It was a mark of distinction to have learned Sanskrit well, and the court poets were masters of its intricacy and elegance.

Real originality in ideas, imagery, and technique did not count. Conventions, whose repetition may seem dull to us, made their appeal to an urbane and highly educated audience of connoisseurs (*rasikas*), men of discriminating taste who were familiar with the techniques of the art and were capable of attuning themselves to the linguistic and expressive subtleties of Sanskrit. The conventions function to expand beyond their given meaning the significance of words and images. The poet seeks to awaken response, not by innovation, but by the skillful manipulation of complex language and imagery. The initiated audience will relish his poetry for its precious qualities as well as for the content of thought.

A *śataka* is theoretically a century of detached stanzas, neither closely knit by a common thread of narrative nor arranged into systematically logical groups. Each independent verse is intended to convey a single flavor (*rasa*) of sentiment or thought and to stand on its own as an aesthetic entity. The verses are very short—most commonly stanzas of four lines in which each quarter stanza has from 8 to 21 syllables. These are arranged in strict metrical patterns governed by quantitative prosody; as in Latin and Greek, rhythm depends on the amount of time required to pronounce a syllable, not on stress. The Bhartrihari collection contains twenty-one different metres, the most common of which are:

1 *Śārdūlavikrīḍitā* (19 syllables to the quarter stanza)
– – – ∪ ∪ – ∪ – ∪ ∪ ∪ – / – – ∪ – – ∪ –
karṇe kokilakāminīkalaravaḥ smero latāmaṇḍapaḥ

2 *Śikharinī* (17 syllables to the quarter stanza)
∪ – – – – – / ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ – – ∪ ∪ ∪ –
sudhāśubhraṁ dhāma sphuradamalaraśmiḥ śaśadharaḥ

3 *Vasantatilakā* (14 syllables to the quarter stanza)
– – ∪ – ∪ ∪ ∪ – ∪ ∪ – ∪ – –
kalpaṁ sthitaṁ tanubhṛtāṁ tanubhis tataḥ kiṁ

4 *Anuṣṭubh* or *Śloka* (8 syllables to the quarter stanza)
⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ∪ – – – (*a* and *c*); ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ∪ – ∪ ∪ (*b* and *d*)—with variations.

āvāsaḥ kriyatāṁ gāṅge
pāpavariṇi vāriṇi
stanamadhye taruṇyā vā
manohāriṇi hāriṇi

As well as metres of this type, measured by the number of syllables, there are others in which only the sum total of syllabic instants or morae is fixed. Of these Bhartrihari uses *Āryā* which has $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet to the half-verse, with 4 morae in each foot. For example, verse 8, which represents the usual form of *Āryā* having a single mora as the sixth foot of the second half-verse, scans as follows:

– –/∪∪–/– –
∪∪∪∪/– –/∪–∪/– –/–
–∪∪/∪–∪/– –
– –/∪∪–/∪/–∪∪/∪

Brevity is not poverty; an abundance of detail and complexity of thought can be compressed into a simple metrical pattern. The stanzas may be compared to the miniature paintings which illustrate the manuscripts of medieval India. Profusion is forced into a miniature mold; the mold is expanded by exploiting the suggestive overtones (*dhvani*) of words and images. When words and images rich with connotations are used, they illuminate the depth of an experience and enhance the appeal of a poem.

Elaborate ornamentation (*alaṁkāra*) is also employed to effect the brilliant condensation. Such rhetorical devices as punning, metaphor (implied and direct), simile, allegory, synecdoche, antithesis, hyperbole, ironical ending, and sarcasm

are common. Punning is a favorite technique in Sanskrit poetry; though Bhartrihari does not use it as extensively as other poets, his verse 139 is a good example. Here punning is used to strengthen the antithesis between amorous passion and peace.

keśaḥ saṁyaminaḥ śruter api paraṁ pāraṁ gate locane
antarvakram api svabhāvaśucibhiḥ kīrṇaṁ dvijanaṁ ganaiḥ
muktānāṁ satatādhivāsaruciram vakṣojakumbhadvayam
ittham tanvi vapuḥ praśāntam api te rāgaṁ karoty eva naḥ

Pun Words	*Passion*	*Peace*
samyamina	tied-up (hair)	self-control
paraṁ pāraṁ gate	extended (to ear); i.e., long (of eyes)	gone to the opposite shore of worldly existence
śruti	ear	Vedas
dvijāna	teeth	twice-born man; one who is initiated
mukta	pearl	released; liberated from worldly existence

Quite impossible to render adequately in English:

Your bound-up hair is restrained;
Your eyes extend to your ears,
Beyond the mundane pale;
The teeth of your mouth
Are twice born like noble men and pure;
Your breasts which swell like elephant's bosses
Are a splendid resting place for pearls
Released from the oyster's hold.
But, slender lady, though your form bespeaks calm,
It only incites my passion for you. [139]

The sonorous quality of Sanskrit words and metres is also an essential part of the verses' structure. Rolling compounds and complexities of alliteration, consonance, and assonance

have a sensuous appeal; when the Sanskrit poet tells of the cooing of mating cuckoos, he says:

karṇe kokila-kāminī-kalaravaḥ

Because of the marked metrical and structural differences between Sanskrit and English verse, it has seemed to me best to avoid the use of regular English metres and stanza forms. I have tried rather to concentrate on reproducing the meaning, tone, and closely knit texture of the original Sanskrit by using analogous syntactic forms and rhetorical devices available in English. Though Bhartrihari's poetry is circumscribed by conventions of language, taste, and courtly life, it does not lack universal appeal and I would hope that the translation carries some of this.

POEMS

Śatakatrayam: Nīti, Śriṅgāra, Vairāgya

I

cūḍottaṁsitacārucandrakalikācañcacchikhābhāsvaro
līlādagdhavilolakāmaśalabhaḥ śreyodaśāgre sphuran
antaḥsphūrjadapāramohatimiraprāgbhāram ucchedayaṁś
cetaḥsadmani yogināṁ vijayate jñānapradīpo haraḥ

2

kṛśaḥ kāṇaḥ khañjaḥ śravaṇarahitaḥ pucchavikalo
vraṇī pūyaklinnaḥ kṛmikulaśatair āvṛtatanuḥ
kṣudhākṣāmo jīrṇaḥ piṭharakakapālārpitagalaḥ
śunīm anveti śvā hatam api ca hanty eva madanaḥ

Poems

I

Homage to the god whose crest is resplendent
With the torch-light moon in crescent phase;
Whose fire, blazing in the wick of bliss,
Consumes with ease the moth of frenzied love;
Whose thunderbolt of deep revelation
Dispels the dismal clouds of delusion.
Homage to Śiva, who shines like wisdom's lamp
In the mansion of the yogin's mind.

2

Gaunt, blind, lame, shorn of ears and tail;
Mangled, putrid, covered with worms;
Starved, wizened, wearing an alms bowl shard
On his neck—a dog will still follow a bitch.
Passion smites even those bereft of life.

3

prāṇāghātān nivṛttiḥ paradhanaharaṇe saṁyamaḥ
satyavākyaṁ
kāle śaktyā pradānaṁ yuvatijanakathāmūkabhāvaḥ
pareṣām
tṛṣṇāsrotovibhaṅgo guruṣu ca vinayaḥ sarvabhūtānukampā
sāmānyaḥ sarvaśāstreṣv anupahatavidhiḥ śreyasām eṣa
panthāḥ

4

boddhāro matsaragrastāḥ
prabhavaḥ smayadūṣitāḥ
abodhopahatāś cānye
jīrṇam aṅge subhāṣitam

5

yadā kiṁcij jño 'haṁ gaja iva madāndhaḥ samabhavaṁ
tadā sarvajño 'smīty abhavad avaliptaṁ mama manaḥ
yadā kiṁcit kiṁcid budhajanasakāśād avagataṁ
tadā mūrkho 'smīti jvara iva mado me vyapagataḥ

3

Refrain from taking life,
Never envy other men's wealth,
Speak words of truth,
Give timely alms within your means.
Keep silence about the conduct of women,
Dam the torrent of your craving,
Do reverence before the venerable,
And bear compassion for all creatures—
This unerring path to bliss
Is taught in all the texts of scripture.

4

Wise men are consumed by greed,
Kings are defiled by haughty ways,
The people suffer from ignorance.
Eloquence is withered on my tongue.

5

When I knew but a little, I was blinded by pride,
As an elephant is by rut;
With my mind so stained I believed,
"I am a sage."
But slowly I learned from the presence of men
Wise in myriad ways;
My pride was, like fever, subdued and I knew,
"I am a fool."

6

yadāsīd ajñānaṁ smaratimirasaṁskārajanitaṁ
tadā dṛṣṭaṁ nārīmayam idam aśeṣaṁ jagad api
idānīm asmākaṁ paṭutaravivekāñjanajuṣāṁ
samībhūtā dṛṣṭis tribhuvanam api brahma manute

7

śubhraṁ sadma savibhramā yuvatayaḥ śvetātapatrojjvalā
lakṣmīr ity anubhūyate sthiram iva sphīte śubhe karmaṇi
vicchinne nitarām anaṅgakalahakrīḍātruṭattantukaṁ
muktājālam iva prayāti jhaṭiti bhraśyad diśo 'dṛśyatām

6

When the darkness of passion wove
A web of ignorance about me,
Then a woman seemed
To fill the world's expanse.
But now that I am favored with the salve
Of keener discernment,
My tranquil sight sees Brahman
Ubiquitous in the world.

7

A splendid palace, wanton maids,
The white umbrella's princely lustre;
All are wealth's graces, which survive
Only while auspicious karma thrives.
When this is exhausted then wealth,
Like a string of pearls snapped
In sport of amorous strife,
Is squandered—
Falling in every dark direction.

8

ajñaḥ sukham ārādhyaḥ
sukhataram ārādhyate viśeṣajñaḥ
jñānalavadurvidagdhaṁ
brahmāpi naraṁ na rañjayati

9

prasahya maṇim uddharen makaravaktradaṁṣṭrāṅkurāt
samudram api saṁtaret pracaladūrmimālākulam
bhujaṅgam api kopitaṁ śirasi puṣpavad dhārayen
na tu pratiniviṣṭamūrkhajanacittam ārādhayet

8

An ignorant man is readily pleased,
More readily yet is a sage.
But a man distorted by trifling knowledge,
Brahmā himself cannot sway.

9

A man may tear a jewel
From a sea monster's jaws,
Cross a tumultuous sea
Of raging tides,
Or twine garlandwise
A wrathful serpent on his head.
But no man can alter
The thoughts of an obstinate fool.

10

śaśī divasadhūsaro galitayauvanā kāminī
saro vigatavārijaṁ mukham anakṣaraṁ svākṛteḥ
prabhur dhanaparāyaṇaḥ satatadurgataḥ sajjano
nṛpāṅgaṇagataḥ khalo manasi sapta śalyāni me

11

maṇiḥ śāṇollīḍhaḥ samaravijayī hetinihato
madakṣīṇo nāgaḥ śaradi saritaḥ śyānapulināḥ
kalāśeṣaś candraḥ suratamṛditā bālavanitā
tanimnā śobhante galitavibhavāś cārthiṣu narāḥ

12

parikṣīṇaḥ kaścit spṛhayati yavānāṁ prasṛtaye
sa paścāt saṁpūrṇo gaṇayati dharitrīṁ tṛṇasamām
ataś cānekāntā gurulaghutayārtheṣu dhaninām
avasthā vastūni prathayati ca saṁkocayati ca

10

The moon paled by day,
An amorous lady with lost youth,
A lake without lotuses,
The dumb face of a handsome man,
A prince obsessed with wealth,
A man of virtue ever wretched,
A villain come to the court of a king—
Seven barbs in my heart.

11

A gem carved by the jeweler's stone,
A warrior-hero wounded at arms,
An elephant wasted by rut,
River banks dry in the sultry months,
The moon in its final phase,
A maid exhausted by love's play,
And men whose riches are spent in alms—
All are magnificent in their decline.

12

A hungry man craves a handful of barley,
But once sated he deems the whole earth worthless straw.
Only the vagaries of men's fortunes determine
When things are praised in hyperbole and disprized.

13

śāstropaskṛtaśabdasundaragiraḥ śiṣyapradeyāgamā
vikhyātāḥ kavayo vasanti viṣaye yasya prabhor nirdhanāḥ
taj jāḍyaṁ vasudhādhipasya sudhiyo hy arthaṁ vināpīśvarāḥ
kutsyāḥ syuḥ kuparīkṣakair na maṇayo yair arghataḥ pātitāḥ

14

vipadi dhairyam athābhyudaye kṣamā
sadasi vākpaṭutā yudhi vikramaḥ
yaśasi cābhiratir vyasanaṁ śrutau
prakṛtisiddham idaṁ hi mahātmanām

15

hartur yāti na gocaraṁ kim api śaṁ puṣṇāti yat sarvadā
arthibhyaḥ pratipādyamānam aniśaṁ prāpnoti vṛddhiṁ parām
kalpānteṣv api na prayāti nidhanaṁ vidyākhyam antardhanaṁ
yeṣāṁ tān prati mānam ujjhata nṛpāḥ kas taiḥ saha spardhate

13

Their speech is rich with words of scripture;
Their learning is worthy of students . . .
When wise men dwell poor in a king's dominion,
The ruler shows his folly.
Even in poverty sages are princes;
Vulgar appraisers are open to censure—
Not the jewels they devalue.

14

Courage in adversity, patience in prosperity,
Eloquence in assembly, heroism at arms,
Thoughts inclined to renown, yearning for the Vedas
All are in the nature of noble men.

15

It eludes the pillage of thieves,
Promotes endless joy;
Bestowed on those who beg,
It waxes greater yet
And perishes not despite the end of time.
Wisdom is a treasure deep within.
Kings, renounce your arrogance
Towards its masters!
Who can rival them?

16

adhigataparamārthān paṇḍitān māvamaṁsthās
tṛṇam iva laghu lakṣmīr naiva tān saṁruṇaddhi
abhinavamadalekhāśyāmagaṇḍasthalānāṁ
na bhavati bisatantur vāraṇaṁ vāraṇānām

17

kṣutkṣāmo 'pi jarākṛśo 'pi śithilaprāyo 'pi kaṣṭāṁ daśām
āpanno 'pi vipannadīdhitir api prāṇeṣu gacchatsv api
mattebhendravibhinnakumbhakavalagrāsaikabaddhaspṛhaḥ
kiṁ jīrṇaṁ tṛṇam atti mānamahatām agre saraḥ kesarī

16

Do not scorn the men
Who have won supreme truth;
Trifling for them as straw, wealth
Offers no temptation.
Elephants whose temples are stained
With streaks of rut
Are not restrained
By filaments of a lotus stalk.

17

Though starved, enfeebled by old age,
Fallen into life's abyss,
With only memories of splendor left,
A member of the living dead—
When he longs for a morsel torn
From the temple of an elephant in rut,
How can the lion, proudest of creatures,
Stoop to feed on withered grass?

18

priyā nyāyyā vṛttir malinam asubhaṅge 'py asukaram
asanto nābhyarthyāḥ suhṛd api na yācyaḥ kṛśadhanaḥ
vipady uccaiḥ stheyaṁ padam anuvidheyaṁ ca mahatāṁ
satāṁ kenoddiṣṭaṁ viṣamam asidhārāvratam idam

19

manasi vacasi kāye puṇyapīyūṣapūrṇās
tribhuvanam upakāraśreṇibhiḥ prīṇayantaḥ
paraguṇaparamāṇūn parvatīkṛtya nityaṁ
nijahṛdi vikasantaḥ santi santaḥ kiyantaḥ

18

A man should choose judicious ways,
Shun treachery even at peril of death;
Neither supplicate evil men
Nor beg alms of an indigent friend;
Hold his head high in the face of misfortune,
And walk in the footsteps of great men.
Who revealed to the saints this vow
As severe as a sword's bare blade?

19

Men whose thoughts and words and deeds
Are steeped in the nectar of merit,
Who fill the world's expanse
With a flood of benevolent acts,
Build into august mountains
The granules of other men's graces,
And spread abroad their own heart's joy—
Such saintly men are few.

20

itaḥ svapiti keśavaḥ kulam itas tadīyadviṣām
itaś ca śaraṇārthinaḥ śikharipatriṇaḥ śerate
ito 'pi vaḍavānalaḥ saha samastasaṁvartakair
aho vitatam ūrjitaṁ bharasahaṁ ca sindhor vapuḥ

21

kvacid bhūmau śayyā kvacid api ca paryaṅkaśayanaṁ
kvacic chākāhāraḥ kvacid api ca śālyodanaruciḥ
kvacit kanthādhārī kvacid api ca divyāmbaradharo
manasvī kāryārthī gaṇayati na duḥkhaṁ na ca sukham

22

namasyāmo devān nanu hatavidhes te 'pi vaśagā
vidhir vandyaḥ so 'pi pratiniyatakarmaikaphaladaḥ
phalaṁ karmāyattaṁ yadi kim aparaiḥ kiṁ ca vidhinā
namas tatkarmabhyo vidhir api na yebhyaḥ prabhavati

20

Bearing Viṣṇu's sleeping form,
Holding the host of his foes at bay,
Sheltering winged mountains
Seeking refuge from the demons' wrath,
Enduring the infernal fire
With all its voracious flames of doom—
Fathomless is the burden
Weighing on the ocean's ample body.

21

He may sleep on bare ground or on a couch,
Fare on roots or dine on sweet rice,
Wear rags or heavenly robes;
When he is rapt in reflection, a sage
Pays no heed to pain or pleasure.

22

We would bow to the gods,
But even they submit to destiny's sway.
We would pay destiny homage,
But it can only grant reward
In accord with our karma.
Nay, if karma is the source of all reward,
What need have we for destiny or deities?
Our fealty is to karma,
Under which even destiny crumbles.

23

daurmantryān nṛpatir vinaśyati yatiḥ sañgāt suto lālanād
vipro 'nadhyayanāt kulaṁ kutanayāc chīlaṁ khalopāsanāt
hrīr madyād anavekṣaṇād api kṛṣiḥ snehaḥ pravāsāśrayān
maitrī cāpraṇayāt samṛddhir anayāt tyāgāt pramādād dhanam

24

jāḍyaṁ hrīmati gaṇyate vratarucau dambhaḥ śucau kaitavaṁ
śūre nirghṛṇatā ṛjau vimatitā dainyaṁ priyālāpini
tejasviny avaliptatā mukharatā vaktary aśaktiḥ sthire
tat ko nāma guṇo bhavet sa guṇināṁ yo durjanair nāṅkitaḥ

23

Beware!
Kings are ruined by bad advice,
Ascetics by society,
Offspring by indulgence,
Priests by ignorance of scripture,
A family by degenerate sons,
Character by bad company;
Modesty by wine,
Husbandry by lack of care,
Affection by distance,
Friendship by distrust,
Prosperity by dearth of luck,
And wealth by prodigal ways.

24

Apathy is ascribed to the modest man,
Fraud to the devout,
Hypocrisy to the pure,
Cruelty to the hero,
Hostility to the anchorite,
Fawning to the courteous man,
Arrogance to the majestic,
Garrulity to the eloquent,
Impotence to the faithful.
Does there exist any virtue
Which escapes
The slander of wicked men?

25

jātir yātu rasātalaṁ guṇagaṇas tasyāpy adho gacchatāṁ
śīlaṁ śailataṭāt patatv abhijanaḥ saṁdahyatāṁ vahninā
śaurye vairiṇi vajram āśu nipatatv artho 'stu naḥ kevalaṁ
yenaikena vinā guṇās tṛṇalavaprāyāḥ samastā ime

26

bhagnāśasya karaṇḍapiṇḍitatanor glānendriyasya kṣudhā
kṛtvākhur vivaraṁ svayaṁ nipatito naktaṁ mukhe bhoginaḥ
tṛptas tatpiśitena satvaram asau tenaiva yātaḥ pathā
svasthās tiṣṭhata daivam eva hi nṛṇāṁ vṛddhau kṣaye cākulam

27

durjanaḥ parihartavyo
vidyayālaṁkṛto 'pi san
maṇinā bhūṣitaḥ sarpaḥ
kim asau na bhayaṅkaraḥ

25

Cast noble birth to nether hell!
Our sundry virtues even lower!
Throw character from a mountain crag!
And lineage into a fire to burn!
Let thunderbolts strike hostile valor!
And leave us free to win that wealth
Without which all these merits
Count for worthless bits of straw.

26

A mouse gnawing a hole in a basket fell
Through it at night into the mouth of a serpent
Whose despondent body lay cramped
In the basket; hunger had weakened his senses.
But nourished by the mouse's flesh,
He escaped by the very same passage.
Be contented! Only chance confounds
The rise and fall of men.

27

A wicked man should be shunned,
Even when embellished with knowledge.
Is not a serpent with diadem hood
An agent of danger?

28

kṣīreṇātmagatodakāya hi guṇā dattāḥ purā te 'khilāḥ
kṣīre tāpam avekṣya tena payasā svātmā kṛśānau hutaḥ
gantuṁ pāvakam unmanas tad abhavad dṛṣṭvā tu mitrāpadaṁ
yuktaṁ tena jalena śāmyati satāṁ maitrī punas tvīdṛśī

29

yā sādhūṅś ca khalān karoti viduṣo mūrkhān hitān dveṣiṇaḥ
pratyakṣaṁ kurute parokṣam amṛtaṁ hālāhalaṁ tatkṣaṇāt
tām ārādhaya cakrikāṁ bhagavatīṁ bhoktuṁ phalaṁ vāñchitaṁ
he sādho tvam ato guṇeṣu vipuleṣv āsthāṁ vṛthā mā kṛthāḥ

30

kṛmikulacitaṁ lālāklinnaṁ vigandhi jugupsitaṁ
nirupamarasaprītyā khādan narāsthi nirāmiṣam
surapatim api śvā pārśvasthaṁ vilokya na śaṅkate
na hi gaṇayati kṣudro jantuḥ parigrahaphalgutām

28

In mixture with water
The substance of milk is diluted.
Water, feeling milk's burning pain,
Yields itself to the fire's attack.
Then to relieve the plight of its friend
Milk is willing even to burn.
But mixed again with water, milk is calmed.
Compare to this the friendship of good men.

29

In an instant she makes the evil good,
The foolish wise, militant enemies gentle,
Dark mysteries clear, deadly poison an ambrosia.
Celebrate then the goddess of virtue
And savor her cherished fruits.
Do not dissipate your thought, good man,
In anxious vain pursuit of divers graces!

30

With relish due ambrosia, a dog eats a meatless bone,
Wormy, spittle-wet, putrid, and vile. He would eat
Without qualm even if he saw the lord of gods nearby.
A wretch does not assess the poverty of his lot.

31

pāpān nivārayati yojayate hitāya
guhyaṁ nigūhati guṇān prakaṭīkaroti
āpadgataṁ ca na jahāti dadāti kāle
sanmitralakṣaṇam idaṁ pravadanti santaḥ

32

mṛgamīnasajjanānāṁ
tṛṇajalasaṁtoṣavihitavṛttīnām
lubdhakadhīvarapiśunā
niṣkāraṇavairiṇo jagati

33

saṁtaptāyasi saṁsthitasya payaso nāmāpi na jñāyate
muktākāratayā tad eva nalinīpatrasthitaṁ rājate
svātau sāgaraśuktisaṁputagataṁ taj jāyate mauktikaṁ
prāyeṇādhamamadhyamottamaguṇāḥ saṁvāsato jāyate

31

He wards off sin and urges
More auspicious ways;
Conceals your secrets
And lauds aloud your virtue;
Never retreats in time of need,
But rather offers aid.
The sages so describe
The marks of a worthy friend.

32

The deer, the fish, and the man of virtue
Only care for grass or sea or peace.
The hunter, the fisherman, and the cynic
Are wanton enemies on earth.

33

A piercing hiss augurs swift end
Of a droplet of water touching molten iron,
But a droplet resting on a lotus-leaf
Assumes a mellow pearl-like hue.
And if in light of some auspicious star
It falls into an oyster shell, it turns into a pearl.
And man attains to vile or mean
Or lofty ways through the company he keeps.

34

kusumastabakasyeva
dvayī vṛttir manasvinaḥ
mūrdhni vā sarvalokasya
śīryate vana eva vā

35

maunān mūkaḥ pravacanapaṭur vātalo jalpako vā
dhṛṣṭaḥ pārśve bhavati ca tathā dūrato 'py apragalbhaḥ
kṣāntyā bhīrur yadi na sahate prāyaśo nābhijātaḥ
sevādharmaḥ paramagahano yoginām apy agamyaḥ

36

namratvenonnamantaḥ paraguṇakathanaiḥ svān guṇān
khyāpayantaḥ
svārthān saṁpādayanto vitatapṛthutarārambhayatnāḥ parārthe
kṣāntyaivākṣeparūkṣākṣaramukharamukhān durmukhān dūṣayantaḥ
santaḥ sāścaryacaryā jagati bahumatāḥ kasya nābhyarcanīyāḥ

34

As it is with clusters of blossoms,
Wise men have two destinies:
To grace the summit of the world
Or wither in the forest.

35

When silent the courtier is branded dumb;
When eloquent, pretentious or a prating fool;
When intimate, presumptuous;
When distant, diffident;
When patient, pusillanimous;
When impetuous, ill-bred.
The rules of service are a mystery
Inscrutable even to masters of wisdom.

36

Ascending through humility,
Vaunting their own virtue
By extolling the graces of others;
Achieving personal ends
With arduous tasks
On others' behalf;
Shaming the abusive spate
Of invectives spewed by villains
With simple acts of patience—
Saints with such extraordinary ways
Go highly esteemed in the world.
Who would not revere them?

37

lobhaś ced aguṇena kiṁ piśunatā yady asti kiṁ pātakaiḥ
satyaṁ cet tapasā ca kiṁ śuci mano yady asti tīrthena kim
saujanyaṁ yadi kiṁ nijaiḥ svamahimā yady asti kiṁ maṇḍanaiḥ
sadvidyā yadi kiṁ dhanair apayaśo yady asti kiṁ mṛtyunā

38

ambhojinīvanavilāsanivāsam eva
haṁsasya hanti nitarāṁ kupito vidhātā
na tv asya dugdhajalabhedavidhau prasiddhāṁ
vaidagdhyakīrtim apahartum asau samarthaḥ

39

khalvāṭo divaseśvarasya kiraṇaiḥ saṁtāpito mastake
vāñchan deśam anātapaṁ vidhivaśād bilvasya mūlaṁ gataḥ
tatrāpy asya mahāphalena patatā bhagnaṁ saśabdaṁ śiraḥ
prāyo gacchati yatra bhāgyarahitas tatraiva yānty āpadaḥ

37

Where there is greed, what need of other evil?
Where calumny, of other sin?
Where there is truth, what need of penance?
Where pure mind, of pilgrimage?
Where there is amity, what need of allies?
Where grandeur, of embellishments?
Where there is wisdom, what need of wealth?
Where infamy, of death?

38

The capricious disposer of fate may destroy
The haṁsa's joy in lolling among lotus beds.
But never can he rob it of the fame of its skill
In effecting the separation of water from milk.

39

A bald-headed man, his pate
Pained by the rays of the sun,
Desiring a shady spot,
Went by fate to the foot
Of a wood-apple tree.
Alas, there his head
Was smashed by a large
Falling fruit.
Verily,
Where goes a man deserted by fortune,
There do adversities follow him.

40

naivākṛtiḥ phalati naiva kulaṁ na śīlaṁ
vidyāpi naiva na ca yatnakṛtāpi sevā
bhāgyāni pūrvatapasā kila saṁcitāni
kāle phalanti puruṣasya yathaiva vṛkṣāḥ

41

aiśvaryasya vibhūṣaṇaṁ sujanatā śauryasya vāksaṁyamo
jñānasyopaśamaḥ śamasya vinayo vittasya pātre vyayaḥ
akrodhas tapasaḥ kṣamā prabhavitur dharmasya nirvyājatā
sarveṣām api sarvakāraṇam idaṁ śīlaṁ paraṁ bhūṣaṇam

40

No fruit is borne by beauty's charm,
Or noble birth, or character pure,
Or learning, or by service done
With arduous care.
Only fortune's merits,
Amassed from former penances,
In season bear their fruit for man,
As do the trees.

41

Bounty serves as an ornament in princes,
Sententious words, in heroes of war,
Dispassion, in philosophers,
Discipline, in anchorites,
Munificence, in men of wealth,
Abated anger, in ascetics,
Tolerance, in sovereign lords,
And guileless candor, in priests;
But high character, the cause of all,
Is a gem which crowns the rest.

42

jāḍyaṁ dhiyo harati siñcati vāci satyaṁ
mānonnatiṁ diśati pāpam apākaroti
cetaḥ prasādayati dikṣu tanoti kīrtiṁ
satsaṁgatiḥ kathaya kiṁ na karoti puṁsām

43

vāñchā sajjanasaṁgame paraguṇe prītir gurau namratā
vidyāyāṁ vyasanaṁ svayoṣiti ratir lokāpavādād bhayam
bhaktiḥ śūlini śaktir ātmadamane saṁsargamuktiḥ khale
ete yeṣu vasanti nirmalaguṇās tebhyo 'parebhyo namaḥ

42

It destroys the mind's folly,
Pours truth into speech,
Bestow's esteem's rare majesty;
Drives out sin,
Purifies the thought of man,
And spreads his fame across the skies.
What can't wise company
Do for a man?

43

Men are rare who have
Desire for good company,
Joy for the merits of others,
Humility towards the venerable;
Zealous yearning for knowledge,
Affection for their wedded wives,
Fear of slander in the world;
Devotion to trident-wielding Śiva,
Strength of self-control,
Immunity from evil ties.
We pay our deepest homage
To these saints of spotless virtue!

44

tṛṣṇāṁ chindhi bhaja kṣamāṁ jahi madaṁ pāpe matiṁ mā kṛthāḥ
satyaṁ brūhy anuyāhi sādhupadavīṁ sevasva vidvajjanān
mānyān mānaya vidviṣo 'py anunaya pracchādaya svān guṇān
kīrtiṁ pālaya duḥkhite kuru dayām etat satāṁ ceṣṭitam

45

guṇavad aguṇavad vā kurvatā kāryajātaṁ
pariṇatir avadhāryā yatnataḥ paṇḍitena
atirabhasakṛtānāṁ karmaṇām ā vipatter
bhavati hṛdayadāhī śalyatulyo vipākaḥ

46

vane raṇe śatrujalāgnimadhye
mahārṇave parvatamastake vā
suptaṁ pramattaṁ viṣam asthitaṁ vā
rakṣanti puṇyāni purā kṛtāni

44

Drown your raging thirst, cultivate patience,
Conquer wanton pride and your mind's obsession with sin!
Speak the truth, follow straight the sanctioned way,
Pay service at the feet of learned men!
Revere the worthy, pacify your foes,
Envelop your virtues in modesty's cloak!
Guard your good name, and console wretched creatures!
This is behavior which marks noble men.

45

Before he implements any act,
Be it villainous or good,
A wise man will weigh with care
All possible repercussions.
The fruition of actions
Performed with impetuous haste
Is like a tainted arrow,
Tormenting man's heart unto death.

46

In dark forests, amidst his foes in war,
In flood or raging flame;
In ocean depths or on precarious peaks;
Slumbering or courting dread danger
With reckless abandon;
Merits earned in former lives
Afford a man protection.

47

bhīmaṁ vanaṁ bhavati tasya puraṁ pradhānaṁ
sarvo janaḥ svajanatām upayāti tasya
kṛtsnā ca bhūr bhavati sannidhiratnapūrṇā
yasyāsti pūrvasukṛtaṁ vipulaṁ narasya

48

majjatv ambhasi yātu merusikharaṁ śatrūñ jayatv āhave
vāṇijyaṁ kṛṣisevanādi sakalā vidyāḥ kalāḥ śikṣatu
ākāśaṁ vipulaṁ prayātu khagavat kṛtvā prayatnaṁ paraṁ
nābhāvyaṁ bhavatīha karmavaśato bhāvyasya nāśaḥ kutaḥ

47

For him dread forests become princely towns,
Rare friendship is offered him by all men,
And earth becomes his mine of precious gems;
Such high estate is fruit of former noble deeds.

48

Dive if you will into fathomless seas,
Ascend Mount Meru's towering peaks,
Vanquish enemies at arms;
Acquire skill in tillage and trade,
Gain mastery of the sciences
And varied arts;
Or endeavor with effort stupendous
To traverse the vast skies
Like a bird.
You may do all this, but karma's force
Alone prevents what is not destined
And compels what is to be.

49

netā yasya bṛhaspatiḥ praharaṇaṁ vajraṁ surāḥ sainikāḥ
svargo durgam anugrahaḥ khalu harer airāvaṇo vāraṇaḥ
ity āścaryabalānvito 'pi balabhid bhagnaḥ paraiḥ saṁgare
tad yuktaṁ nanu daivam eva śaraṇaṁ dhig dhig vṛthā
pauruṣam

50

dānaṁ bhogo nāśas
tisro gatayo bhavanti vittasya
yo na dadāti na bhuṅkte
tasya tṛtīyā gatir bhavati

51

yasyāsti vittaṁ sa naraḥ kulīnaḥ
sa paṇḍitaḥ sa śrutavān guṇajñaḥ
sa eva vaktā sa ca darśanīyaḥ
sarve guṇāḥ kāñcanam āśrayanti

49

Though Indra's guide was wise Brihaspati
His weapon the adamant thunderbolt,
His army the host of deities,
His citadel heaven's vault,
His ally propitious Viṣṇu,
His steed the invincible elephant Airāvaṇa;
Even Indra, slayer of dreadful demons,
Endowed with extraordinary prowess,
Was broken in battle by militant foes.
No power gives refuge from baneful fate.
How vain are all efforts of valor!

50

Generosity, luxury, and ruin
All reduce a man's wealth.
A miser, who neither gives nor enjoys,
Lives in dread of the third.

51

A man of wealth is held to be high-born,
Wise, scholarly, and discerning;
Eloquent and even handsome—
All virtues are accessories to gold!

52

ratnair mahārghais tutuṣur na devā
na bhejire bhīmaviṣeṇa bhītim
sudhāṁ vinā na prayayur virāmaṁ
na niścitārthād viramanti dhīrāḥ

53

santy anye 'pi bṛhaspatiprabhṛtayaḥ saṁbhāvitāḥ pañcaṣās
tān pratyeṣa viśeṣavikramarucī rāhur na vairāyate
dvāveva grasate dineśvaraniśāprāṇeśvarau bhāsvarau
bhrātaḥ parvaṇi paśya dānavapatiḥ śīrṣāvaśeṣīkṛtaḥ

52

The gods were not appeased by the fabulous gems
They drew from the cosmic ocean;
Nor did they falter when the sea spewed forth
A dreadful poison.
They ceased to churn its milky waters
Only when it yielded up
The nectar of immortal life.
The resolute never relinquish their goal.

53

Some will grant the orbiting planets
Claim to high regard.
But Rāhu, having tasted the uncommon power
In the nectar of the gods, disdains to feud with them.
This demon king whose severed head
Is his remnant of Viṣṇu's wrath,
Reserves his vengeance for a chosen pair:
At a fixed celestial time
He effects eclipse of the luminous
Lords of night and day.

54

śrotraṁ śrutenaiva na kuṇḍalena
dānena pāṇir na tu kaṅkaṇena
vibhāti kāyaḥ karuṇāparāṇāṁ
paropakāreṇa na candanena

55

jayanti te sukṛtino
rasasiddhāḥ kavīśvarāḥ
nāsti yeṣāṁ yaśaḥkāye
jarāmaraṇajanmabhīḥ

56

yad dhātrā nijabhālapaṭṭalikhitaṁ stokaṁ mahad vā dhanaṁ
tat prāpnoti marusthale 'pi nitarāṁ merau ca nāto 'dhikam
tad dhīro bhava vittavatsu kṛpaṇāṁ vṛttiṁ vṛthā mā kṛthāḥ
kūpe paśya payonidhāv api ghaṭo gṛhṇāti tulyaṁ jalam

54

The ear of a compassionate man
Is graced by the Vedas,
Not by pendants;
His hand by bounty,
Not by bracelets;
His body by benevolence,
Not by sandal paste.

55

Victorious are the favored master-poets,
Skilled in the sentiments' alchemy.
In their body of fame they feel
No threat of old age, death, and rebirth.

56

Whatever wealth, vast or scant, is traced
On man's brow by Disposer Brahmā
Will he win though he dwell on a barren desert,
But no more on the golden mountain Meru.
Be patient then! Do not sully yourself
Before the rich with vile servility!
Perceive that a jug draws its measure
Of water from a well or from the sea.

57

lāṅgūlacālanam adhaś caraṇāvapātaṁ
bhūmau nipatya vadanodaradarśanaṁ ca
śvā piṇḍadasya kurute gajapuṁgavas tu
dhīraṁ vilokayati cāṭuśataiś ca bhuṅkte

58

rājan dudhukṣasi yadi kṣitidhenum enāṁ
tenādya vatsam iva lokam imaṁ puṣāṇa
tasmiṅś ca samyaganiśaṁ paripoṣyamāṇe
nānāphalaiḥ phalati kalpalateva bhūmiḥ

59

satyānṛtā ca paruṣā priyavādinī ca
hiṁsrā dayālur api cārthaparā vadānyā
nityavyayā pracuranityadhanāgamā ca
vārāṅganeva nṛpanītir anekarūpā

57

Wagging his tail, crouching to beg,
Writhing through ridiculous tricks,
A dog plays toady to the hand that feeds him.
While the lordly elephant-bull
Views all with aloof disdain and devours
His food while others bear him flattery.

58

King, if you wish to milk your realm like a cow,
First nourish the world as you would a calf.
When it is nurtured with constant care,
A kingdom yields fruits like a wish-granting vine.

59

Sincere and fraudulent,
Harsh and honey-tongued;
Ruthless as well as merciful,
Niggardly, then munificent;
At one time prodigal,
At another miserly with his hoards of wealth—
Kingly behavior, like a harlot,
Shows infinite variety.

60

na kaścic caṇḍakopānām
ātmīyo nāma bhūbhujām
hotāram api juhvantaṁ
spṛṣṭo dahati pāvakaḥ

61

akaruṇatvam akāraṇavigrahaḥ
paradhanāpahṛtiḥ parayoṣitaḥ
svajanabandhujaneṣv asahiṣṇutā
prakṛtisiddham idaṁ hi durātmanām

62

ārambhagurvī kṣayiṇī krameṇa
laghvī purā vṛddhimatī ca paścāt
dinasya pūrvārdhaparārdhabhinnā
chāyeva maitrī khalasajjanānām

60

No man is the favorite
Of a king inclined to passionate rage.
A fire when touched burns even the priest
Who pours it oblation.

61

Want of compassion, wanton pugnacity,
Plunder of other men's wealth and wives,
Impatience with good men and kinsmen alike;
All are in the nature of wicked men.

62

One bursts forth expansive, dwindling the course,
The other, scant in prelude, finally grows great.
As shadows of afternoon differ from those of morning,
So differs the friendship of evil and good men.

63

bhavanti namrās taravaḥ phalodgamair
navāmbubhir bhūrivilambino ghanāḥ
anuddhatāḥ satpuruṣāḥ samṛddhibhiḥ
svabhāva evaiṣa paropakāriṇām

64

padmākaraṁ dinakaro vikacaṁ karoti
candro vikāśayati kairavacakravālam
nābhyarthito jaladharo 'pi jalaṁ dadāti
santaḥ svayaṁ parahiteṣu kṛtābhiyogāḥ

65

yad acetano 'pi pādaiḥ
spṛṣṭaḥ prajvalati saviturinakāntaḥ
tat tejasvī puruṣaḥ
parakṛtanikṛtiṁ kathaṁ sahate

63

Bows bend low with ripened fruit;
Clouds hang down with dulcet rain;
Noble men bow graciously with riches.
This is the way of bountiful things.

64

The sun brings pools of lotuses to bloom,
The moon illuminates nocturnal lilies,
A cloud rains its water,
And noble men struggle for other men's good.

65

A sunstone, though insensate,
Is incensed when touched by the rays of the sun.
How then can a man of pride
Bear slander cast by other men?

66

ājñā kīrtiḥ pālanaṁ brāhmaṇānāṁ
dānaṁ bhogo mitrasaṁrakṣaṇaṁ ca
yeṣām ete ṣaḍ guṇā na pravṛttāḥ
ko 'rthas teṣāṁ pārthivopāśrayeṇa

67

vyālaṁ bālamṛṇālatantubhir asau roddhuṁ samujjṛmbhate
bhettuṁ vajramaṇiñ śirīṣakusumaprāntena saṁnahyate
mādhuryaṁ madhubindunā racayituṁ kṣārāmbudher īhate
netuṁ vāñchati yaḥ satāṁ pathi khalān sūktaiḥ
sudhāsyandibhiḥ

68

svāyattam ekāntahitaṁ vidhātrā
vinirmitaṁ chādanam ajñatāyāḥ
viśeṣataḥ sarvavidāṁ samāje
vibhūṣaṇaṁ maunam apaṇḍitānām

66

Authority, renown, protection of priests;
Munificence, sensuality, and succor of friends—
When courtiers fail to exhibit these gifts,
What is their worth at the court of a king?

67

He ventures to tether a vicious elephant
With filaments of tender lotus,
To cut an adamantine gem
With petals of silk-tree blossoms,
To render sweet the saline sea
With a single drop of honey,
Who tries to lead wicked men to the path of the good
With mellifluous words of wisdom.

68

Creator Brahmā wrought
An extraordinary guise for ignorance,
Which may be worn at will.
In company with learned men,
The silence of fools
Serves to adorn them.

69

udbhāsitākhilakhalasya viśṛṅkhalasya
prāgjātavismṛtanijādhamakarmavṛtteḥ
daivād avāptavibhavasya guṇadviṣo 'sya
nīcasya gocaragataiḥ sukham āsyate kaiḥ

70

vidyā nāma narasya rūpam adhikaṁ pracchannaguptaṁ dhanaṁ
vidyā bhogakarī yaśaḥsukhakarī vidyā gurūṇāṁ guruḥ
vidyā bandhujano videśagamane vidyā paraṁ devatā
vidyā rājasu pūjyate na hi dhanaṁ vidyāvihīnaḥ paśuḥ

71

dākṣiṇyaṁ svajane dayā parajane śāṭhyaṁ jane durjane
prītiḥ sādhujane smayaḥ khalajane vidvajjane ārjavam
śauryaṁ śatrujane kṣamā gurujane nārījane dhūrtatā
ye caivaṁ puruṣāḥ kalāsu kuśalās teṣv eva lokasthitiḥ

69

When a man is manifestly wicked
And debauched,
Disposed to reckless base behavior
Learned through former lives—
A foe of grace endowed with money
By some quirk of fate—
Why do men take pleasure
In consorting with the boor?

70

Knowledge is man's crowning mark,
A treasure secretly buried,
The source of luxury, fame, and bliss,
A guru most venerable,
A friend on foreign journeys,
The pinnacle of divinity.
Knowledge is valued by kings beyond wealth—
When he lacks it, a man is a brute.

71

Kindness in a kinsman, sympathy in a stranger,
Guile in a rogue, affection in a saint,
Arrogance in a villain, honesty in a scholar
Prowess in an enemy, patience in a teacher,
Cunning in a woman . . . in these persons,
Skilled in their arts, rests the matrix of society.

72

kare ślāghyas tyāgaḥ śirasi gurupādapraṇamatā
mukhe satyā vāṇī vijayi bhujayor vīryam atulam
hṛdi svacchā vṛttiḥ śrutam adhigataṁ ca śravaṇayor
vināpy aiśvaryeṇa prakṛtimahatāṁ maṇḍanam idam

73

vahati bhuvanaśreṇīṁ śeṣaḥ phaṇāphalakasthitāṁ
kamaṭhapatinā madhyepṛṣṭhaṁ sadā sa ca dhāryate
tam api kurute kroḍādhīnaṁ payodhir anādarād
aha ha mahatāṁ niḥsīmānaś caritravibhūtayaḥ

74

parivartini saṁsāre mṛtaḥ
ko vā na jāyate
sa jāto yena jātena
yāti vaṁśaḥ samunnatim

72

Bounty is fit grace for man's hand,
Homage to venerable men for his head,
Truth for his mouth,
Valor for his conquering arms,
Calm composure for his heart,
Attention to the Vedas for his ears.
Great men endowed with such gems
Have no need of princely wealth.

73

The mythical serpent Śesa
Supports the worlds on his hood,
And he in turn is borne
On the back of the tortoise king,
Whom the vast ocean shelters
Effortlessly in its depths.
The wondrous exploits of the great
Exceed all mundane bounds.

74

Whirling in saṁsāra,
Every man who dies is born again;
But he alone is truly born
Whose birth exalts his race.

75

siṅhaḥ śiśur api nipatati
madamalinakapolabhittiṣu gajeṣu
prakṛtir iyaṁ sattvavatāṁ
na khalu vayas tejaso hetuḥ

76

keyūrā na vibhūṣayanti puruṣaṁ hārā na candrojjvalā
na snānaṁ na vilepanaṁ na kusumaṁ nālaṁkṛtā mūrdhajāḥ
vāṇy ekā samalaṁkaroti puruṣaṁ yā saṁskṛtā dhāryate
kṣīyante khalu bhūṣaṇāni satataṁ vāgbhūṣaṇaṁ bhūṣaṇam

75

A lion when young makes bold assault
On an elephant in rage of rut.
Daring is born in the valiant;
Age and might are not its cause.

76

Armlets do not adorn a person,
Or necklaces luminous like the moon;
Or ablutions, or ointments,
Or blossoms, or beautiful hair.
Eloquent speech which is polished well
Is the only true embellishment.
Other ornaments waste away,
While the jewels of eloquence last to grace a man.

77

tāvad eva kṛtināṁ api sphuraty
eṣa nirmalavivekadīpakaḥ
yāvad eva na kurañgacakṣuṣāṁ
tāḍyate caṭulalocanāñcalaiḥ

78

dhanyās ta eva capalāyatalocanānāṁ
tāruṇyadarpaghanapīnapayodharāṇām
kṣāmodaroparilasattrivalīlatānāṁ
dṛṣṭvākṛtiṁ vikṛtim eti mano na yeṣām

79

smitena bhāvena ca lajjayā dhiyā
parāṅmukhair ardhakaṭākṣavīkṣitaiḥ
vacobhir īrṣyākalahena līlayā
samastabhāvaiḥ khalu bandhanaṁ striyaḥ

77

Discrimination's lucid light
Continues to shine for learned men
Only while it is not eclipsed
By the tremulous lashes of women's eyes.

78

When men behold the beauty of women
With exotic flashing eyes,
Youthful pride and voluptuous breasts,
With creepers of beauty creases
Twining above their slender bellies,
Those few are fortunate whose minds
Are still unperturbed.

79

With smiles, affection, modesty, and art;
Hostile looks and ardent glances;
Eloquence, jealous quarrels, and sport—
With all her emotions woman enchains us.

80

etāś caladvalayasaṁhatimekhalottha-
jhaṅkāranūpuraravāhṛtarājahaṁsyaḥ
kurvanti kasya na mano vivaśaṁ taruṇyo
vitrastamugdhahariṇīsadṛśākṣipātaiḥ

81

satyaṁ janā vacmi na pakṣapātāl
lokeṣu saptasv api tathyam etat
nānyan manohāri nitambinībhyo
duḥkhaikahetur na ca kaścid anyaḥ

82

līlāvatīnāṁ sahajā vilāsās
ta eva mūḍhasya hṛdi sphuranti
rāgo nalinyā hi nisargasiddhas
tatra bhramaty eva mudhā ṣaḍaṅghriḥ

80

With the striking of their slipping bangles,
The jeweled sounds of their girdles
And their ringing anklets,
They shame the call of the royal swan.
With the trembling eyes of frightened does
Girls can yoke the minds of men.

81

I do indeed speak without bias,
This is acknowledged as truth among men:
Nothing enthralls us like an ample-hipped woman,
Nothing else causes such pain.

82

Women's gestures are naturally charming,
Seductive only in a fool's infatuated heart.
The lotus' passionate red is natural too,
And still bees hover there bewitched.

83

asārāḥ santy ete virativirasā vātha viṣayā
jugupsantāṁ yad vā nanu sakaladoṣāspadam iti
tathāpy antastattvapraṇihitadhiyām apy atibalas
tadīyo 'nākhyeyaḥ sphurati hṛdaye ko 'pi mahimā

84

mātsaryam utsārya vicārya kāryam
āryāḥ samaryādam idaṁ vadantu
sevyā nitambāḥ kimu bhūdharāṇām
uta smarasmeravilāsinīnām

85

kim iha bahubhir uktair yuktiśūnyaiḥ pralāpair
dvayam iha puruṣāṇāṁ sarvadā sevanīyam
abhinavamadalīlālālasaṁ sundarīṇāṁ
stanabharaparikhinnaṁ yauvanaṁ vā vanaṁ vā

83

The pleasures of sense may be trivial
And bitter in the end;
They may be spurned and marked
As an abode of evil,
And yet, even the majesty of men
Whose thoughts are fixed on truth
Wavers in their sway.
What power is this which throbs in our hearts?

84

Cut off all envy, examine the matter,
Tell us decisively, you noble men,
Which we ought to attend upon:
The sloping sides of wilderness mountains
Or the buttocks of women abounding in passion?

85

Why all these words and empty prattle?
Two worlds alone are worth a man's devotion.
The youth of beautiful women wearied by heavy breasts
And full of fresh wine's heady ardor for sport,
Or the forest . . .

86

rājaṅs tṛṣṇāmburāśer na hi jagati gataḥ kaścid evāvasānaṁ
ko vā arthaiḥ prabhūtaiḥ svavapuṣi galite yauvane
sānurāgaḥ
gacchāmaḥ sadma yāvad vikasitakumudendīvarālokinīnām
ākramyākramya rūpaṁ jhaṭiti na jarayā luṭyate
preyasīnām

87

upari ghanaṁ ghanapaṭalaṁ
tiryag girayo 'pi nartitamayūrāḥ
kṣitir api kandaladhavalā
dṛṣṭiṁ pathikaḥ kva pātayatu

88

saṁsāre 'sminn asāre pariṇatitarale dve gatī paṇḍitānāṁ
tattvajñānāmṛtāmbhaḥplutalalitadhiyāṁ yātu kālaḥ
kadācit
no cen mugdhāṅganānāṁ stanajaghanaghanābhogasaṁbhoginīnāṁ
sthūlopasthasthalīṣu sthagitakaratalasparśalolodyatānām

86

King, who in this world has crossed
To the end of the ocean of craving?
And what is the use of great wealth
When the body's youthful passion is spent?
So do we dally in our halls
While the lotus grace of their denizens yet blooms.
We dally ere insidious age
Wastes the beauty of our mistresses.

87

The sky is dark in a cloak of clouds,
Across the hills peacocks dance,
The ground is white with fallen blossoms.
Where does a pining wanderer dare to rest his eye?

88

In a mundane existence, vapid and transient,
Men who are wise find two refuges.
They spend some time with minds
Submerged in the fluid elixir of wisdom.
The rest belongs to tender mistresses
Whose breasts and hips embody pleasure's luxury,
Mistresses aroused to lust by caresses
Concealed in their laps of ample flesh.

89

kvacit subhrūbhañgaiḥ kvacid api ca lajjāparigataiḥ
kvacid bhītitrastaiḥ kvacid api ca līlāvilasitaiḥ
kumārīṇām etair vadanasubhagair netravalitaiḥ
sphurallīlābjānāṁ prakaraparikīrṇā iva diśaḥ

90

vaktraṁ candraviḍambi pañkajaparīhāsakṣame locane
varṇaḥ svarṇam apākariṣṇur alinījiṣṇuḥ kacānāṁ cayaḥ
vakṣojāvibhakumbhavibhramaharau gurvī nitambasthalī
vācāṁ hāri ca mārdavaṁ yuvatiṣu svābhāvikaṁ
maṇḍanam

91

nāmṛtaṁ na viṣaṁ kiṁcid
ekāṁ muktvā nitambinīm
saivāmṛtalatā raktā
viraktā viṣavallarī

89

Lured here by curving beautiful brows,
There by gestures of modesty,
By quivering looks of alarm,
By the graces of amorous play,
By lovely faces and darting eyes;
I am lured by signs of awakening maids
And every direction seems strewn
With lotuses blooming for dalliance.

90

A face to rival the moon,
Eyes that make mockery of lotuses,
Complexion eclipsing gold's luster,
Thick tresses that shame the black bee,
Breasts like elephant's swelling bosses,
Heavy hips,
A voice enchanting and soft—
The adornment in maidens is natural.

91

There is no ambrosia or poison
Except in the love of an ample-hipped woman;
Enamored, she is an ambrosial vine,
Indifferent, a poisonous creeper.

92

bhrūcāturyākuñcitākṣāḥ kaṭākṣāḥ
snigdhā vāco lajjitāntāś ca hāsāḥ
līlāmandaṁ prasthitaṁ ca sthitaṁ ca
strīṇām etad bhūṣaṇaṁ cāyudhaṁ ca

93

smitaṁ kiṁcid vaktraṁ saralataralo dṛṣṭivibhavaḥ
parispando vācām abhinavavilāsoktisarasaḥ
gatīnām ārambhaḥ kiśalayitalīlāparikaraḥ
spṛśantyās tāruṇyaṁ kim iva na hi ramyaṁ mṛgadṛśaḥ

94

āvartaḥ saṁśayānām avinayabhavanaṁ pattanaṁ sāhasānāṁ
doṣāṇāṁ saṁnidhānaṁ kapaṭaśatamayaṁ kṣetram
apratyayānām
svargadvārasya vighnaṁ narakapuramukhaṁ sarvamāyākaraṇḍaṁ
strīyantraṁ kena sṛṣṭaṁ viṣam amṛtamayaṁ prāṇilokasya
pāśaḥ

92

Glances cast with dancing brows and downcast eyes,
Tender words and modest smiles,
Dallying languor in posture and gait—
All are woman's ornament and her weapon.

93

Her smiling mouth,
The power of her artless tremulous glance!
The stream of words
Sweet with talk of new diversions!
Her invention of movements
Displaying a sapling's lithe grace!
What charm eludes a fawn-eyed maiden
Entering into the fullness of youth?

94

Who raised this maze of doubts, house of scandal,
Bawdy town of audacity?
Who carved this mine of faults, region of deceits,
Sowed this field of sham?
Who built this bar at heaven's gate, aperture to hell's abyss,
Wove this hoard of sorcery?
Who contrived the woman-snare, potion of ambrosial poison,
Fetter for the world of men?

95

sanmārge tāvad āste prabhavati hi naras tāvad evendriyāṇāṁ
lajjāṁ tāvad vidhatte vinayam api samālambate tāvad eva
bhrūcāpākṛṣṭamuktāḥ śravaṇapathajuṣo nīlapakṣmāṇa ete
yāval līlāvatīnāṁ na hṛdi dhṛtimuṣo dṛṣṭibāṇāḥ patanti

96

yad etat pūrṇendudyutiharam udārākṛtidharaṁ
mukhābjaṁ tanvaṅgyāḥ kila vasati yatrādharamadhu
idaṁ tat kiṁ pākadrumaphalam ivātīva virasaṁ
vyatīte 'smin kāle viṣam iva bhaviṣyaty asukhadam

95

A man may tread the righteous path,
Be master of his senses,
Retire in timidity
Or cling to modest ways—only until
The seductive arrow-glances of amorous women
Fall on his heart,
Glances drawn to her ear,
Shot from the bow of her brow,
And winged by long black lashes.

96

Bearing the luster of a full moon
At its loftiest phase,
The lotus-face of a slender girl
Locks honey in her lips.
What is tart now like unripe fruit
On vines of gourd,
When time has run its course
Will be an acrid poison.

97

saṁsāre 'sminn asāre kunṛpatibhavanadvārasevākalaṅka—
vyāsaṅgavyastadhairyaṁ katham amaladhiyo mānasaṁ
saṁvidadhyuḥ
yady etāḥ prodyadindudyutinicayabhṛto na syur ambhojanetrāḥ
preṅkhatkāñcīkalāpāḥ stanabharavinamanmadhyabhāgās
taruṇyaḥ

98

acchācchacandanarasārdrakarā mṛgākṣyo
dhārāgṛhāṇi kusumāni ca kaumudī ca
mando marut sumanasaḥ śuci harmyapṛṣṭhaṁ
grīṣme madaṁ ca madanaṁ ca vivardhayanti

99

parimalabhṛto vātāḥ śākhā navāṅkurakoṭayo
madhupavirutotkaṇṭhābhājaḥ priyāḥ pikapakṣiṇām
viralasuratasvedodgārā vadhūvadanendavaḥ
prasarati dhanāḍhyānāṁ grīṣme kuto 'pi guṇodayaḥ

97

How could men of wisdom
Let their minds' vigor be sapped,
Be distracted by the ignominies of courting
At the gates of an evil king's palace,
Were it not for maids flashing lotus eyes,
Splendid as the newly risen moon,
Maids with girdles of bells playing
About their waists bent under heavy breasts.

98

Women bathed in sandalwood scents,
Flashing antelope-eyes,
Arbors of fountains, flowers
And moonlight,
A terrace swept with breezes
Of flowering jasmine—
These are summer's fan
For passion's flame and Kāma's.

99

Winds laden with perfumes,
Branches tipped with tender shoots;
Mates of cuckoos whose drunken cries
Express their longing;
Moonlike faces of women
With droplets of moisture from sports of love—
What sends this profusion of graces
Issuing forth in a summer of opulence?

100

śāstrajño 'pi praguṇitanayo 'py ātmabodho 'pi gāḍhaṁ
saṁsāre 'smin bhavati viralo bhājanaṁ sadgatīnām
yenaitasmin nirayanagaradvāram udghāṭayantī
vāmākṣīṇāṁ bhavati kuṭilā bhrūlatā kuñcikeva

101

unmīlattrivalītaraṅgavalayā prottuṅgapīnastana-
dvaṁdvenodyatacakravākamithunā vaktrāmbujodbhāsinī
kāntākāradharā nadīyam abhitaḥ krūrāśayā neṣyate
saṁsārārṇavamajjanaṁ yadi tato dūreṇa saṁtyajyatām

102

iha hi madhuragītaṁ rūpam etad raso 'yaṁ
sphurati parimalo 'sau sparśa eṣa stanānām
iti hṛtaparamārthair indriyair bhrāmyamāṇaḥ
svahitakaraṇadhūrtaiḥ pañcabhir vañcito 'smi

100

Even the scholar of scripture,
Though his discipline be thorough and his wisdom profound,
Rarely partakes of high estates in the world.
The culprit unlocking the door to the city of hell
Is fair-eyed woman's key, her graceful creeper-brow.

101

Like waves three furrows of beauty encircle her waist,
A pair of wild geese in flight are her lusty breasts,
A radiant blooming lotus is her face.
Unless you yearn for the river which bears woman's form
And shelters the monster of her moods, escape
And from afar shun the worldly waters' deadly ablution.

102

A melodious song,
A graceful form,
A sweet draught,
A heady fragrance,
Then the touch of her breasts.
I whirl in sensations
Which veil what is real.
I fall deceived by senses
Cunning in seduction's art.

103

saṁsāra tava paryanta-
padavī na davīyasī
antarā dustarā na syur
yadi re madirekṣaṇāḥ
tatrāste smarataskaraḥ

104

kāminīkāyakāntāre
kucaparvatadurgame
mā saṁcara manaḥpāntha
tatrāste smarataskaraḥ

105

śṛṅgāradrumanīrade prasṛmarakrīḍārasaśrotasi
pradyumnapriyabāndhave caturatāmuktāphalodanvati
tanvīnetracakorapārvaṇavidhau saubhāgyalakṣmīnidhau
dhanyaḥ ko 'pi na vikriyāṁ kalayati prāpte nave yauvane

103

The path which leads beyond
Your bounds, Saṁsāra,
Would be less treacherous
Were it not for intoxicating glances
Waylaying us at every turn.

104

Let not your wanderer's mind
Roam in the forest of woman's form.
There in the mountains of her bosom
Lurks the robber Kāma.

105

A cloud pouring on the tree of passion,
A torrent of desire seeking love's diversion,
A valued ally of Kāmadeva,
An ocean concealing pearls of cunning,
A waxing moon drunk by woman's thirsting gaze,
A mine of tempting treasure—
Youth spares only a favored few
From the crises of its turbulence.

106

rāgasyāgāram ekaṁ narakaśatamahāduḥkhasaṁprāptihetur
mohasyotpattibījaṁ jaladharapaṭalaṁ jñānatārādhipasya
kandarpasyaikamitraṁ prakaṭitavividhaspaṣṭadoṣaprabandhaṁ
loke 'smin na hy anarthavrajakusumavanaṁ yauvanād anyad
asti

107

draṣṭavyeṣu kim uttamaṁ mṛgadṛśaḥ premaprasannaṁ
mukhaṁ
ghrātavyeṣv api kiṁ tadāsyapavanaḥ śrāvyeṣu kiṁ
tadvacaḥ
kiṁ svādyeṣu tadoṣṭhapallavarasaḥ sparśeṣu kiṁ tattanur
dhyeyaṁ kiṁ navayauvane suhṛdayaiḥ sarvatra
tadvibhramāḥ

108

no satyena mṛgāṅka eṣa vadanībhūto na cendīvara—
dvaṁdvaṁ locanatāṁ gataṁ na kanakair apy aṅgayaṣṭiḥ kṛtā
kiṁ tv evaṁ kavibhiḥ pratāritamanās tattvaṁ vijānann api
tvaṁ māṁsāsthimayaṁ vapur mṛgadṛśāṁ matvā janaḥ sevate

106

It is passion's abode,
The source of a hundred hells of pain,
Delusion's seed,
The cloud eclipsing the moon of knowledge,
Kāmadeva's loyal friend,
In league with sundry flagrant sins—
This world boasts no forest
With so many flowers of evil as youth.

107

What is supreme among visions?
The face of a fawn-eyed maid delighted by love.
Among fragrances? the breath of her mouth.
Among sounds? her speech.
Among tastes? the nectar of her budlike lips.
Among textures? her soft body.
What is most worthy a lover's attention?
Her distraction with love in youth's early bloom.

108

Surely the moon does not rise in her face,
Or a pair of lotuses rest in her eyes,
Or gold compose her body's flesh.
Yet, duped by poets' hyperbole, even a sage,
A pondering man, worships the body of woman—
A mere concoction of skin and flesh and bones.

109

jātyandhāya ca durmukhāya ca jarājīrṇākhilāṅgāya ca
grāmīṇāya ca duḥkulāya ca galatkuṣṭhābhibhūtāya ca
yacchantīṣu manoharaṁ nijavapur lakṣmīlavaśraddhayā
paṇyastrīṣu vivekakalpalatikāśastrīṣu rajyeta kaḥ

110

veśyāsau madanajvālā
rūpendhanasamedhitā
kāmibhir yatra hūyante
yauvanāni dhanāni ca

111

madhurayaṁ madhurair api kokilā-
kalakalair malayasya ca vāyubhiḥ
virahiṇaḥ praṇihanti śarīriṇo
vipadi hanta sudhāpi viṣāyate

109

To the blind, the ugly, the barren and decrepit man,
To the churl, the man of low birth, and the leper,
They yield their seductive bodies in hope of a trifling sum.
Who can be enamored of courtesans,
Knives which slash discernment's wish-granting vine?

110

A courtesan is the fire of passion,
Flaming with the fuel of beauty;
A fire where youth and wealth
Are sacrificed by lustful men.

111

Through sweet medley of cuckoos' cries
And winds of the sandalwood mountains Spring
Destroys creatures estranged from their lovers.
In affliction even nectar turns to poison.

112

śaṁbhusvayaṁbhuharayo hariṇekṣaṇānāṁ
yenākriyanta satataṁ guhakumbhadāsāḥ
vācām agocaracaritrapavitritāya
tasmai namo bhagavate makaradhvajāya

113

strīmudrāṁ jhaṣaketanasya jayanīṁ sarvārthasaṁpatkarīṁ
ye mūḍhāh pravihāya yānti kudhiyo mithyāphalānveṣiṇaḥ
te tenaiva nihatya nirdayataraṁ nagnīkṛtā muṇḍitāḥ
kecit pañcaśikhīkṛtāś ca jaṭilāḥ kāpālikāś cāpare

114

vistāritaṁ makaraketanadhīvareṇa
strīsaṁjñitaṁ baḍiśam atra bhavāmburāśau
yenācirāt tadadharāmiṣalolamartya-
matsyān vikṛṣya sa pacaty anurāgavahnau

112

We bow to the god whose sign is a sea serpent,
To Kāma, who makes the gods Śiva, Brahma, and Viṣṇu
Slaves in dark chambers of doe-eyed women;
To Kāma, whose marvelous artifice eludes all words.

113

Woman is Kāma's victorious seal,
Imprinting his triumph on all things.
Deluded men who forsake her
Are fools pursuing illusory fruits,
Fools condemned by Kāma without mercy
To become naked mendicants, wearing shorn
Or tufted or shaggy hair
And bearing begging bowls of skull bone.

114

Sportive Kāma casts his woman-lure
Abroad, into this worldly sea.
Fools greedy for her ruddy lips
Are quickly caught like fish
And broiled on passion's flame.

115

unmattapremasaṁrambhād
ārambhante yad añganāḥ
tatra pratyūham ādhātuṁ
brahmāpi khalu kātaraḥ

116

mālatī śirasi jṛmbhaṇonmukhī
candanaṁ vapuṣi kuñkumāvilam
vakṣasi priyatamā madālasā
svarga eṣa pariśiṣṭa āgataḥ

117

kuñkumapañkakalañkitadehā
gaurapayodharakampitahārā
nūpurahaṁsaraṇatpadapadmā
kaṁ na vaśīkurute bhuvi rāmā

115

When women burn
From zeal of frenzied passion,
Even great Brahmā
Fears to bar their way.

116

White jasmine in her hair,
The drowsy look of her face,
Saffron mixed with sandal paste
On her lovely body—
A mistress with the languor
Of seduction in her bosom
Is heaven
In its highest sphere.

117

When saffron paste stains her body,
Necklaces dangle on her pale yellow breasts,
And anklets sound like swan calls on her lotus feet,
What man escapes the enchantress' sway?

118

nūnaṁ hi te kavivarā viparītabodhā
ye nityam āhur abalā iti kāminīnām
yābhir vilolataratārakadṛṣṭipātaiḥ
śakrādayo 'pi vijitā abalāḥ kathaṁ tāḥ

119

udvṛttastanabhāra eṣa tarale netre cale bhrūlate
rāgādhikyatam oṣṭhapallavadalaṁ kurvantu nāma vyathām
saubhāgyākṣarapaṅktikeva likhitā puṣpāyudhena svayaṁ
madhyasthā hi karoti tāpam adhikaṁ romāvalī kena sā

120

svaparapratārako 'sau
nindati yo 'līkapaṇḍito yuvatīḥ
yasmāt tapaso 'pi phalaṁ
svargaḥ svarge 'pi cāpsarasaḥ

118

Surely poets are mistaken
Who call amorous women "weak"
When their tremulous wanton glances
Captivate Indra and other heroes.
In what way are such women weak?

119

Full unruly breasts, flashing eyes, enticing brows,
And budlike lips full of passion disquiet me.
Well they may, but why does a supple line of hair
Drawn on her belly by Kāma's flower weapon
Become an indelible mark of beauty
To torment me so excessively?

120

A deceiver of himself and his peers
Is the pompous pandit who reviles young women.
The fruit of his austerity is heaven
And even heaven is full of nymphs.

121

viśramya viśramya vanadrumāṇāṁ
chāyāsu tanvī vicacāra kācit
stanottarīyeṇa karoddhṛtena
nivārayantī śaśino mayūkhān

122

adarśane darśanamātrakāmā
dṛṣṭau pariṣvaṅgarasaikalolā
āliṅgitāyāṁ punar āyatākṣyām
āśāsmahe vigrahayor abhedam

123

urasi nipatitānāṁ srastadhammillakānāṁ
mukulitanayanānāṁ kiṁcid unmīlitānām
uparisuratakhedasvinnagaṇḍasthalīnām
adharamadhu vadhūnāṁ bhāgyavantaḥ pibanti

121

A certain slender woman was wandering,
Seeking solace in shadows of forest trees,
Warding off the moon's scorching rays
With the silken shawl held by her hand.

122

When out of sight our longing is to see her,
Beholding her we yearn for sweet embrace,
And when we hold the long-eyed beauty
Our bodies crave for union.

123

When she lies on your breast
Amidst the disarray of her own scented hair,
With eyes like slightly opened buds
And cheeks flushed pink from love's fatigue,
The lips of a woman are honey
Which favored men may drink.

124

prāṅ mā meti manoramāgataguṇaṁ jātābhilāṣaṁ tataḥ
savrīḍaṁ tadanu ślathīkṛtatanu pratyastadhairyaṁ punaḥ
premārdraspṛhaṇīyanirbhararatakrīḍāpragalbhaṁ tato
niḥsaṅgāṅgavikarṣaṇādhikasukhaṁ ramyaṁ kulastrīratam

125

tāvad evāmṛtamayī
yāval locanagocarā
cakṣuḥpathād apetā tu
viṣād apy atiricyate

126

na gamyo mantrāṇāṁ na ca bhavati bhaiṣajyaviṣayo
na cāpi pradhvaṁsaṁ vrajati vividhaiḥ śāntikaśataiḥ
bhramāveśād aṅge kim api vidadhad bhaṅgam asamaṁ
smarāpasmāro 'yaṁ bhramayati dṛśaṁ ghūrṇayati ca

124

At first she rebuffs me,
Then in a mood born of dalliance, passion is roused,
Slowly her body falls languid, and composure is shed,
Showing her bold in enviable games of love's deluge,
Borne by the searching gestures of her limbs' abandon—
A gentlewoman's pleasure is my delight.

125

Woman rests ambrosial
Within our vision's pale,
But woman vanished from our sight
Is greater bane than poison.

126

Spells cannot cure it, nor drugs confound it,
Nor ritual magic deal it destruction,
Passion, like an epileptic fit, attacks man's limbs
To inflict the torment of frenzied derangement.

127

nūnam ājñākaras tasyāḥ
subhruvo makaradhvajaḥ
yad bhugnanetrasaṁcāra-
sūcite 'pi pravartate

128

idam anucitam akramaś ca puṁsāṁ
yad iha jarasy api mānmatho vikāraḥ
yad api ca na kṛtaṁ nitambinīnāṁ
stanapatanāvadhi jīvitaṁ rataṁ vā

129

vyādīrgheṇa calena vakragatinā tejasvinā bhoginā
nīlābjadyutināhinā varam ahaṁ daṣṭo na taccakṣuṣā
daṣṭe santi cikitsakā diśi diśi prāyeṇa dharmārthino
mugdhākṣikṣaṇavīkṣitasya na hi me mantro na cāpy auṣadham

127

Kāmadeva must be the vassal
Of fair-browed woman;
He moves to conquer any man marked
By the course of her glance.

128

It is unbefitting and perverse for men
Who are aged to have erotic passions.
Nor is it meet for ample-hipped women
Whose bosoms are flaccid to cling to life or love.

129

I prefer being bitten by a terrible serpent,
Long, wanton, tortuous, gleaming like a black lotus,
To being smitten by her eye.
Healers are everywhere to cure one of a serpent bite,
But there is no spell or remedy for me;
I was struck by the glance of a beautiful woman!

130

sati pradīpe saty agnau
satsu tārāmaṇīnduṣu
vinā me mṛgaśāvākṣyā
tamobhūtam idaṁ jagat

131

mukhena candrakāntena
mahānīlaiḥ śiroruhaiḥ
pāṇibhyāṁ padmarāgābhyāṁ
reje ratnamayīva sā

132

guruṇā stanabhāreṇa
mukhacandreṇa bhāsvatā
śanaiścarābhyāṁ pādābhyāṁ
reje grahamayīva sā

130

Beside a lamp or flaming hearth,
In light of stars or sun or moon,
Without her fawnlike eyes
My world remains in darkness.

131

With the moonstone beauty of her face,
Her sapphire-black tresses,
Her hands the ruby of red lotuses,
She glowed with the magic of gems.

132

With her bosom bearing Jupiter's weight,
Her face radiant like the moon,
Her languid legs' saturnine gait,
She glowed with the planets' magic.

133

mugdhe dhānuṣkatā keyam
apūrvā tava dṛśyate
yayā vidhyasi cetāṅsi
guṇair eva na sāyakaiḥ

134

sudhāśubhraṁ dhāma sphuradamalaraśmiḥ śaśadharaḥ
priyāvaktrāmbhojaṁ malayajarajaś cātisurabhiḥ
srajo hṛdyāmodās tad idam akhilaṁ rāgiṇi jane
karoty antaḥkṣobhaṁ na tu viṣayasaṁsargavimukhe

135

āvāsaḥ kriyatāṁ gāṅge
pāpavāriṇi vāriṇi
stanamadhye taruṇyā vā
manohāriṇi hāriṇi

133

Sweet maid, you perform a singular feat
With the archer's bow.
You pierce hearts without arrows,
But with strands of your beauty.

134

A whitewashed dwelling,
The moon with crystal beams,
The lotus look of a beloved face,
Redolent sandal paste,
And garlands of sweet fragrance—
In a man of passion
All this creates unrest,
But not in one who scorns the luxury
Of pleasure.

135

Rest yourself on a shore of the Ganges
Whose waters ward off sin,
Or between the breasts of a maid
Whose necklace snares the mind.

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136

tasyāḥ stanau yadi ghanau jaghanaṁ ca hāri
vaktraṁ ca cāru tava citta kim ākulatvam
puṇyaṁ kuruṣva yadi teṣu tavāsti vāñchā
puṇyair vinā na hi bhavanti samīhitārthāḥ

137

ito vidyudvallīvilasitam itaḥ ketakataru-
sphuradgandhaḥ prodyajjaladaninadasphūrjitam itaḥ
itaḥ kekikrīḍākalakalaravaḥ pakṣmaladṛśāṁ
kathaṁ yāsyanty ete virahadivasāḥ saṁbhṛtarasāḥ

138

āvāsaḥ kilakiñcitasya dayitā pārśve vilāsālasā
karṇe kokilakāminīkalaravaḥ smero latāmaṇḍapaḥ
goṣṭhī satkavibhiḥ samaṁ katipayair mugdhāḥ sitāṁśoḥ karāḥ
keṣāṁcit sukhayanti cātra hṛdayaṁ caitre vicitrāḥ srajaḥ

136

If her breasts are full,
Her hips voluptuous,
Her face exquisite,
Why, my heart, do you waste in despair?
Earn merit if you covet them!
The longed-for luxuries elude a man who has no merit.

137

Flashing streaks of lightning,
Drifting fragrance of tropical pines,
Thunder sounding from gathering clouds,
Peacocks crying in amorous tones—
How will long-lashed maids pass
These emotion-laden days in their lovers' absence?

138

A lover's bed beside his mistress,
Languid from games of abandon.
The cooing of amorous cuckoos in his ears.
A bower of newly blooming creepers.
Conversation with eloquent bards
Beneath stray beams of the moon.
The heart of any man here is enchanted
By Spring's varied garlands of color.

139

keśāḥ saṁyaminaḥ śruter api paraṁ pāraṁ gate locane
antarvaktram api svabhāvaśucibhiḥ kīrṇaṁ dvijānāṁ gaṇaiḥ
muktānāṁ satatādhivāsaruciraṁ vakṣojakumbhadvayam
itthaṁ tanvi vapuḥ praśāntam api te rāgaṁ karoty eva naḥ

140

viyad upari samegharn bhūmayaḥ kandalinyo
navakuṭajakadambāmodino gandhavāhāḥ
śikhikulakalakekārāvaramyā vanāntāḥ
sukhinam asukhinaṁ vā sarvam utkaṇṭhayanti

141

taruṇīveṣā dīpitakāmā
vikasitajātīpuṣpasugandhiḥ
unnatapīnapayodharabhārā
prāvṛṭ tanute kasya na harṣam

139

Your bound-up hair is restrained:
Your eyes extend to your ears,
Beyond the mundane pale;
The teeth of your mouth
Are twice born like noble men and pure;
Your breasts which swell like elephants' bosses
Are a splendid resting place for pearls
Released from the oyster's hold.
But, slender lady, though your form bespeaks calm,
It only incites my passion for you.

140

When clouds shade the sky
And plantain lilies mask the earth,
When winds bear lingering scents
Of fresh verbena and kadamba
And forest retreats rejoice
With the cries of peacock flocks;
Then ardent yearning overpowers
Loved and wretched men alike.

141

In the garb of a maid blazing passion's fire,
Diffusing the fragrance of blossoming nutmeg,
And bearing swollen heavy clouds,
The autumnal rains arouse men's lust.

142

āsāreṇa na harmyataḥ priyatamair yātuṁ bahiḥ śakyate
śītotkampanimittam āyatadṛśā gāḍhaṁ samāliṅgyate
jālaiḥ śīkaraśītalāś ca maruto ratyantakhedacchido
dhanyānāṁ bata durdinaṁ sudinatāṁ yāti priyāsaṁgame

143

ardhaṁ nītvā niśāyāḥ sarabhasasuratāyāsasaṁśleṣayogaiḥ
prodbhūtāsahyatṛṣṇo madhumadanirato harmyapṛṣṭhe vivikte
saṁbhogaklāntakāntāśithilabhujalatāvarjitaṁ karkarīto
jyotsnābhinnācchadhāraṁ na pibati salilaṁ śāradaṁ
mandabhāgyaḥ

144

hemante dadhidugdhasarpiraśanā māñjiṣṭhavāsobhṛtaḥ
kāśmīradravasāndradigdhavapuṣaḥ khinnā vicitrai
rataiḥ
vṛttorustanakāminījanakṛtāśleṣā gṛhābhyantare
tāmbūlīdalapūgapūritamukhā dhanyāḥ sukhaṁ śerate

142

Heavy rains keep lovers
Trapped in their mansions;
In the shivering cold a lord
Is embraced by his long-eyed maid,
And winds bearing cool mists
Allay their fatigue after amorous play.
Even a dreary day is fair
For favored men who nestle in love's arms.

143

Having passed half the night in exhausting embraces
Of passionate sport,
Now, on an isolated porch, his insatiable thirst indulges
In intoxicating draughts,
Poured from a water jug by the languid creeper-arm
Of his love-wearied mistress.
He is a cursed man who never drinks this autumnal water,
A crystal flow shattered by moonlight.

144

Dining on foods rich in curd, milk, and ghee,
Wearing robes of scarlet madder,
Warm on their saffron-oil anointed bodies;
They lie weary from pleasure's diversions,
Wrapped in the embrace of voluptuous amorous ladies
Whose mouths are moistened with betel leaf—
Favored men lie in winter's ease.

145

keśānākalayan dṛśo mukulayan vāso balād ākṣipan
ātanvan pulakodgamaṁ prakaṭayan nāvegakampaṁ gateḥ
vāraṁ vāram udārasītkṛtikṛto dantacchadān pīḍayan
prāyaḥ śaiśira eṣa saṁprati marut kāntāsu kāntāyate

146

sadā yogābhyāsavyasanavaśayor ātmamanasor
avicchinnā maitrī sphurati kṛtinas tasya kim imaiḥ
priyāṇām ālāpair adharamadhubhir vaktramadhubhiḥ
saniḥśvāsāmodaiḥ sukucakalaśāśleṣasurataiḥ

147

vacasi bhavati sañgatyāgam uddiśya vārtā
śrutamukharamukhānāṁ kevalaṁ paṇḍitānām
jaghanam aruṇaratnagranthikāñcīkalāpaṁ
kuvalayanayanānāṁ ko vihātuṁ samarthaḥ

145

Unloosing their hair,
Pressing closed their eyes,
Pulling at their garments,
Exciting chills on their flesh,
Destroying their demeanor,
Biting their lips
Until great sighs confess their love;
The wind in winter is a lusty lover
Of beautiful women.

146

When his mind and his person, through practice of yoga,
Hold control over evil passion
And endless benevolence throbs in his heart,
What use has the master ascetic for these:
The prattle of fond women,
Honey lips and honey faces,
The sweetness of sighs,
Or wanton embrace of heavy breasts?

147

Renunciation of worldly attachment
Is only a topic in parlance of scholars,
Whose mouths are wordy with wisdom.
Who can really forsake the hips
Of beautiful women, bound
With girdles of ruby jewels?

148

bhrāntvā deśam anekadurgaviṣamaṁ prāptaṁ na kiṁcit phalaṁ
tyaktvā jātikulābhimānam ucitaṁ sevā kṛtā niṣphalā
bhuktaṁ mānavivarjitaṁ paragṛhe āśaṅkayā kākavat
tṛṣṇe jṛmbhaṇi pāpakarmanirate nādyāpi saṁtuṣyasi

149

utkhātaṁ nidhiśaṅkayā kṣititalaṁ dhmātā girer dhātavo
nistīrṇaḥ saritāṁ patir nṛpatayo yatnena saṁsevitāḥ
mantrārādhanatatpareṇa manasā nītāḥ śmaśāne niśāḥ
prāptaḥ kāṇavarāṭako 'pi na mayā tṛṣṇe 'dhunā mā bhava

148

So have I roamed through lands fraught with peril
In fruitless pursuit of reward,
Relinquished my pride and my birthright
To fawn in futile servitude,
Shamelessly eaten in other men's homes,
Cowering like a common crow.
Greed, you increased, gloating on my wretched deeds;
Even now you will not rest content!

149

I mined the earth in search of treasure,
Smelted iron mountains' rocky hoards,
Crossed treacherous oceans' expanses,
Placated kings with devoted care;
Bent on evoking the powers occult,
By night I roamed the burning grounds.
Yet ne'er a broken cowry shell did I obtain—
Cursed greed, grant me at least some reprieve!

150

khalollāpāḥ soḍhāḥ katham api tadārādhanaparair
nigṛhyāntarbāṣpaṁ hasitam api śūnyena manasā
kṛto vittastambhapratihatadhiyām añjalir api
tvam āśe moghāśe kim aparamato nartayasi mām

151

ādityasya gatāgatair aharahaḥ saṁkṣīyate jīvitaṁ
vyāpārair bahukāryabhāragurubhiḥ kālo na vijñāyate
dṛṣṭvā janmajarāvipattimaraṇaṁ trāsaś ca notpadyate
pītvā mohamayīṁ pramādamadirām unmattabhūtaṁ jagat

152

dīnā dīnamukhaiḥ sadaiva śiśukair ākṛṣṭajīrṇāmbarā
krośadbhiḥ kṣudhitair narair na vidhurā dṛśyeta ced gehinī
yācñābhaṅgabhayena gadgadagalatruṭyadvilīnākṣaraṁ
ko dehīti vadet svadagdhajaṭharasyārthe manasvī pumān

150

I bear the villains' taunting words
Intent upon appeasing them.
I choke my tears, which in disguise
Become a void heart's laughter.
I pay vile homage to my foes
Stupefied by wealth.
Hope, you are barren—How
Do you still compel me to dance?

151

The cyclic recurrence of sunset and dawn
Daily serves to measure life's decay,
But burdened with his mundane tasks,
Man does not grasp time's fugitive flight.
Seeing old age, pain, and death,
He is not aroused to anxiety.
Drunk on delusion's heady wine,
The world is mad in oblivion.

152

If other men did not see his wife the pitiful victim
Of poverty's woe, and the gaunt faces
Of his starved and whimpering children
As they pulled at their mother's ragged clothes,
How could he stammer out the word "give"
That sticks in his throat from fear of rebuff?
What high-minded man would stoop to beg
For the sake of his own empty belly?

153

nivṛttā bhogecchā puruṣabahumāno vigalitaḥ
samānāḥ svaryātāḥ sapadi suhṛdo jīvitasamāḥ
śanair yaṣṭyutthānaṁ ghanatimiraruddhe ca nayane
aho dhṛṣṭaḥ kāyas tad api maraṇāpāyacakitaḥ

154

na dhyātaṁ padam īśvarasya vidhivat saṁsāravicchittaye
svargadvārakapāṭapāṭanapaṭur dharmo 'pi nopārjitaḥ
nārīpīnapayodharoruyugalaṁ svapne 'pi nāliṅgitaṁ
mātuḥ kevalam eva yauvanavanacchede kuṭhārā vayam

155

bhogā na bhuktā vayam eva bhuktās
tapo na taptaṁ vayam eva taptāḥ
kālo na yāto vayam eva yātās
tṛṣṇā na jīrṇā vayam eva jīrṇāḥ

153

All desire for pleasure has waned,
The esteem of men has ebbed;
Beloved friends and peers of life
Now are lost to heaven;
The simplest movement requires a cane;
These eyes are veiled in darkness.
How bold this body is to fear
The final blow of death!

154

I failed to fix my aimless thoughts on Śiva's
Holy foot to cleave these mundane bonds;
I heedlessly shunned the righteous way
Which penetrates heaven's massive doors;
I even failed in my dreams to embrace
Woman's voluptuous breasts, and her ample hips.
I lived my life like an axe, wasting
The forest of youth my mother slaved to nurture.

155

We savored no pleasure,
So we are consumed.
We practiced no penance,
So we are afflicted.
We did not elude time,
So we are pursued.
We did not wither craving,
So we are the wizened.

156

valibhir mukham ākrāntaṁ
palitair aṅkitaṁ śiraḥ
gātrāṇi śithilāyante
tṛṣṇaikā taruṇāyate

157

avaśyaṁ yātāraś cirataramuṣitvāpi viṣayā
viyoge ko bhedas tyajati na jano yat svayam amūn
vrajantaḥ svātantryād atulaparitāpāya manasaḥ
svayaṁ tyaktā hy ete śamasukham anantaṁ vidadhati

158

bhikṣāśanaṁ tad api nīrasam ekavāraṁ
śayyā ca bhūḥ parijano nijadehamātram
vastraṁ ca jīrṇaśatakhaṇḍamayī ca kanthā
hā hā tathāpi viṣayā na parityajanti

156

My face is graven with wrinkles,
My head is marked with grey,
My limbs are withered and feeble—
My craving alone keeps its youth.

157

Even the sensuous pleasures which rest
Within our reach inevitably ebb away.
Is the pain of abstention so intense
That man cannot renounce them himself?
If pleasures abandon him at random,
Man suffers unparalleled anguish;
But if he renounces them at will.
He reaps the fruit of eternal calm.

158

Even though my food is alms,
A single meager daily meal;
Though my bed is bare ground,
My servant no one but myself;
Though my clothes are tattered,
Patched with scraps of rag;
The lures of the senses
Never grant release.

159

stanau māṁsagranthī kanakakalaśāv ity upamitau
mukhaṁ śleṣmāgāraṁ tad api ca śaśāṅkena tulitam
sravanmūtraklinnaṁ karivarakaraspardhi jaghanam
aho nindyaṁ rūpaṁ kavijanaviśeṣair guru kṛtam

160

ajānan māhātmyaṁ patati śalabhas tīvradahane
sa mīno 'py ajñānād baḍiśayutam aśnātu piśitam
vijānanto 'py ete vayam iha vipajjālajaṭilān
na muñcāmaḥ kāmān aha ha gahano mohamahimā

161

phalam alam aśanāya svādu pānāya toyaṁ
śayanam avanipṛṣṭhaṁ valkale vāsasī ca
lavadhanamadhupānabhrāntasarvendriyāṇām
avinayam anumantuṁ notsahe durjanānām

159

Her breasts, those fleshy protuberances,
Are compared to golden bowls;
Her face, a vile receptacle of phlegm,
Is likened to the moon;
Her thighs, dank with urine, are said
To rival the elephant's trunk.
Mark how this despicable form
Is flourished by the poets.

160

Unconscious of its violent power,
The moth flies into a flame;
The unwary fish through ignorance
Bites the baited hook;
And even we, men who perceive
The tangled net of ruin
Which passion casts, do not avoid it.
Alas, delusion's sway is inscrutable!

161

Forest fruits are my only food,
Mountain water my drink,
The bare earth my bed,
Bark cloth is my raiment.
I cannot acquiesce
In the impudence of evil men
Whose drunken senses totter
From the wine of trifling wealth.

162

vipulahṛdayair dhanyaiḥ kaiścij jagaj janitaṁ purā
vidhṛtam aparair dattaṁ cānyair vijitya tṛṇaṁ yathā
iha hi bhuvanāny anye dhīrāś caturdaśa bhuñjate
katipayapurasvāmye puṁsāṁ ka eṣa madajvaraḥ

163

tvaṁ rājā vayam apy upāsitaguruprajñābhimānonnatāḥ
khyātas tvaṁ vibhavair yaśāṁsi kavayo dikṣu pratanvanti naḥ
itthaṁ mānada nātidūram ubhayor apy āvayor antaraṁ
yady asmāsu parāṅmukho 'si vayam apy ekāntato niḥspṛhāḥ

164

abhuktāyāṁ yasyāṁ kṣaṇam api na yātaṁ nṛpaśatair
bhuvas tasyā lābhe ka iva bahumānaḥ kṣitibhujām
tadaṁśasyāpy aṁśe tad avayavaleśe 'pi patayo
viṣāde kartavye vidadhati jaḍāḥ pratyuta mudam

162

This world was engendered long ago
By gracious men with noble hearts.
Some sustained it, others conquered
To give it away as if it were straw.
Men of courage even now enjoy power
Over the various realms.
What then is this fever of pride
In men who rule the smallest town?

163

You are a king;
I am exalted in homage to an honored guru's wisdom.
You are notorious for your might;
The poets spread my fame across the worlds.
O prince of pride,
The gulf between us is not great.
If you turn your face from me,
I am quite indifferent.

164

When warring rulers never cease
To ravage and divide the land,
What glory is there for a king
In conquest?
But men who rule some meager plot of land,
Village lords,
Who ought to feel despair,
Rather boast delight—the fools!

165

na naṭā na viṭā na gāyanā
na paradrohanibaddhabuddhayaḥ
nṛpasadmani nāma ke vayaṁ
stanabhārānamitā na yoṣitaḥ

166

arthānām īśiṣe tvaṁ vayam api ca girām īśmahe yāvad itthaṁ
śūras tvaṁ vāgmidarpajvaraśamanavidhāv akṣayaṁ pāṭavaṁ
naḥ

sevante tvāṁ dhanāndhā matimalahataye mām api śrotukāmā
mayy apy āsthā na te cet tvayi mama sutarām eṣa rājan
gato 'smi

167

pareṣāṁ cetāṅsi pratidivasam ārādhya bahudhā
prasādaṁ kiṁ netuṁ viśasi hṛdaya kleśakalilam
prasanne tvayy antaḥ svayam uditacintāmaṇiguṇe
vimukteḥ saṁkalpaḥ kim abhilaṣitaṁ puṣyati na te

165

Our intellects are not intent on knavery;
We rank not as dancers, lewd buffoons, or songsters,
Nor as women bent with weighty breasts.
Who then are we in the palace of a king?

166

You are a king of opulence;
I am a master
Of infinite words.
You are a warrior;
I hold a skill in eloquence
Which subdues the fever of pride.
Men blinded by riches serve you;
But they desire to hear me
That their minds may be pure.
Since you have no regard for me,
The less have I for you,
O King—I am gone.

167

Why, my heart, do you waste the days
Seeking attention of other men?
Why do you enter the thicket
Of anguish just to curry favor?
If you find contentment within yourself,
Your thought will become a wish-granting gem—
Zeal for freedom's joy
Will starve your worldly craving.

168

amīṣāṁ prāṇānāṁ tulitabisinīpatrapayasāṁ
kṛte kiṁ nāsmābhir vigalitavivekair vyavasitam
yad āḍhyānām agre draviṇamadaniḥsaṁjñamanasāṁ
kṛtaṁ vītavrīḍair nijaguṇakathāpātakam api

169

bhrātaḥ kaṣṭam aho mahān sa nṛpatiḥ sāmantacakraṁ ca tat
pārśve tasya ca sāpi rājapariṣat tāś candrabimbānanāḥ
udriktaḥ sa ca rājaputranivahas te bandinas tāḥ kathāḥ
sarvaṁ yasya vaśād agāt smṛtipadaṁ kālāya tasmai namaḥ

170

vayaṁ yebhyo jātāś ciraparigatā eva khalu te
samaṁ yaiḥ saṁvṛddhāḥ smṛtiviṣayatāṁ te 'pi gamitāḥ
idānīm ete smaḥ pratidivasam āsannapatanā
gatās tulyāvasthāṁ sikatilanadītīrataruhiḥ

168

To cultivate these lives ephemeral,
Like droplets on a lotus leaf,
What have we not stooped to
In the drought of our discernment?
In the presence of rich men whose minds
Are insensate from wines of wealth
We have stood shamelessly boasting
Our own virtues aloud.

169

Alas, my friend, great was the king
With his circle of courtiers,
The counselors at his side,
The ladies' moonlike faces,
The host of haughty princes,
The bards and their tales—
But we submit to time,
Which swept them all from power
To the path of memory.

170

Our parents, who begot and bore us
To the world are long since dead.
Our friends of youth are banished
To the realm of remembrances.
Now, from day to day, we ourselves await
Death's imminent call,
Like trees on the frail sandbanks
Of rivers, we await the flood.

171

yatrānekaḥ kvacid api gṛhe tatra tiṣṭhaty athaiko
yatrāpy ekas tadanu bahavas tatra cānte na caikaḥ
itthaṁ cemau rajanidivasau dolayan dvāv ivākṣau
kālaḥ kālyā saha bahukalaḥ krīḍati prāṇisāraiḥ

172

tapasyantaḥ santaḥ kim adhinivasāmaḥ suranadīṁ
guṇodārān dārān uta paricarāmaḥ savinayam
pibāmaḥ śāstraughān uta vividhakāvyāmṛtarasān
na vidmaḥ kiṁ kurmaḥ katipayanimeṣāyuṣi jane

171

In a house where once there were many,
Stands a solitary man.
Where there were many descendants,
No one remains.
Tossing day and night
As if they were two dice
And moving men as if they were pawns,
Time plays a frenzied game with Kāli,
His partner in destruction.

172

Should I sojourn in austerity
On a sacred river's bank
Or should I, in worldly fashion,
Court women of high grace?
Or drink at streams of scripture
The nectar of rich verse?
In life as transient as a flashing glance,
I can choose no single course.

173

āśā nāma nadī manorathajalā tṛṣṇātaraṅgākulā
rāgagrāhavatī vitarkavihagā dhairyadrumadhvaṁsinī
mohāvartasudustarātigahanā prottuṅgacintātaṭī
tasyāḥ pāragatā viśuddhamanaso nandantu yogīśvarāḥ

174

ye vardhante dhanapatipuraḥprārthanāduḥkhadīrghā
ye cālpatvaṁ dadhati viṣayākṣepaparyastabuddheḥ
teṣām antaḥ sphuritahasitaṁ vāsarāṇāṁ smareyaṁ
dhyānacchede śikharikuharagrāvaśayyāniṣaṇṇaḥ

173

Hope is a river
Whose water is desire,
Whose waves are craving.
Passions are crocodiles,
Conjectures are birds
Destroying the tree of resolve.
Anxiety carves a deep ravine
And the whirlpool of delusion
Makes it difficult to ford.
Let ascetics who cross
To the opposite shore
Exult in their purified minds.

174

Days which dragged through the heavy pain
I felt entreating wealthy lords,
Days which fled to naught while my mind
Was ensnared in the sensuous sphere—
Let me recollect those days
With laughter bursting in my heart
When I awake from meditation's depths,
Seated on a mountain cave's stone couch.

175

vidyā nādhigatā kalaṅkarahitā vittaṁ ca nopārjitaṁ
śuśrūṣāpi samāhitena manasā pitror na saṁpāditā
ālolāyatalocanā yuvatayaḥ svapne 'pi nāliṅgitāḥ
kālo 'yaṁ parapiṇḍalolupatayā kākair iva preritaḥ

176

āsaṁsāraṁ tribhuvanam idaṁ cinvatāṁ tāta tādṛṅ
naivāsmākaṁ nayanapadavīṁ śrotravartmāgato vā
yo 'yaṁ dhatte viṣayakariṇīgāḍharūḍhābhimāna-
kṣībasyāntaḥkaraṇakariṇaḥ saṁyamālānalīlām

177

vayam iha parituṣṭā valkalais tvaṁ ca lakṣmyā
sama iha paritoṣo nirviśeṣo viśeṣaḥ
sa tu bhavatu daridro yasya tṛṣṇā viśālā
manasi ca parituṣṭe ko 'rthavān ko daridraḥ

175

I never learned pure scholarship
Or amassed any wealth,
My mind was not devout
In reverence due my parents;
Even in dreams I failed to embrace
Maids with trembling eyes.
I passed my time like a common crow
Groveling for other men's crumbs.

176

Though I search the triple world
Through all its mundane passages,
No man has met my vision's field
Or come within my hearing's range
Who could really bind
To a post of self-restraint
The raging elephant of his mind
With its drunken desire to court
The world of the senses.

177

I dwell content in the hermit's dress of bark,
While you luxuriate in silken splendor.
Still, my contentment is equal to yours;
Disparity's guise is deceiving.
Now let him be called a pauper
Who bears an insatiable greed;
But when a mind rests content,
What can it mean to be "wealthy" or "poor"?

178

bhogā meghavitānamadhyavilasatsaudāminīcañcalā
āyur vāyuvighaṭṭitābhrapaṭalīlīnāmbuvad bhañguram
lolā yauvanalālanā tanubhṛtām ity ākalayya drutaṁ
yoge dhairyasamādhisiddhisulabhe buddhiṁ vidadhvaṁ
budhāḥ

179

puṇye grāme vane vā mahati sitapaṭacchannapālīṁ kapālīm
ādāya nyāyagarbhadvijahutahutabhugdhūma-
dhūmropakaṇṭham
dvāraṁ dvāraṁ pravṛtto varam udaradarīpūraṇāya kṣudhārto
mānī prāṇī sa dhanyo na punar anudinaṁ tulyakulyeṣu dīnaḥ

178

Pleasures are as ephemeral as lightning
Flashing through a canopy of clouds;
Life is as fragile as a water-filled
Thunderhead blown by the wind;
Transient for mortals is youth's caressing.
Wise men, reflect on this and hasten
To fix your minds in yoga,
Purest fruit of calm and trance.

179

Wandering through holy cities or sacred forests,
Bearing the covered alms bowl,
Begging where the smoke-grey sky
Gives sign that priest offer holy oblations
Whose remnants are fit for mendicants—
This is the righteous way
To fill a gnawing belly.
The proud mendicant is still blessed,
But not the parasitic wretch
Who grovels daily amidst his kinsmen.

180

etasmād viramendriyārthagahanād āyāsakād āśrayāc
chreyomārgam aśeṣaduḥkhaśamanavyāpāradakṣaṁ
kṣaṇāt
śāntaṁ bhāvam upaihi saṁtyaja nijāṁ kallolalolāṁ gatiṁ
mā bhūyo bhaja bhaṅgurāṁ bhavaratiṁ cetaḥ
prasīdādhunā

181

puṣpair mūlaphalaiḥ priye praṇayini prītiṁ kuruṣvādhunā
bhūśayyā navavalkalair akaruṇair uttiṣṭha yāmo vanam
kṣudrāṇām avivekamūḍhamanasāṁ yatreśvarāṇāṁ sadā
vittavyādhivivekavihvalagirāṁ nāmāpi na śrūyate

180

Abandon the depths of sensuous chaos,
That prison of torment!
The course reaching beyond toward bliss
Can instantly allay all pain.
Initiate then a peaceful mood!
Renounce your gamboling unsteady ways!
Forsake the ephemeral mundane passions!
Rest placid now, my thoughts!

181

My dear, rest content
With forest flowers, herbs, and fruits;
With earth's bare couch
And garments fashioned crudely of fresh bark.
We retire now to a sylvan silence,
To the forest where no echo sounds
Of wicked men whose muddled minds
Show their confusion—
Vile lords whose tongues stammer folly aloud,
Confounded by disease of wealth.

182

mohaṁ mārjaya tām upārjaya ratiṁ candrārdhacūḍāmaṇau
cetaḥ svargataraṅgiṇītaṭabhuvām āsaṅgam aṅgīkuru
ko vā vīciṣu budbudeṣu ca taḍillekhāsu ca strīṣu ca
jvālāgreṣu ca pannageṣu ca saridvegeṣu ca pratyayaḥ

183

agre gītaṁ sarasakavayaḥ pārśvato dākṣiṇātyāḥ
pṛṣṭhe līlāvalayaraṇitaṁ cāmaragrāhiṇīnām
yady asty evaṁ kuru bhavarasāsvādane lampaṭatvaṁ
no cec cetaḥ praviśa sahasā nirvikalpe samādhau

184

kiṁ kandāḥ kandarebhyaḥ pralayam upagatā nirjharā vā
giribhyaḥ
pradhvastā vā tarubhyaḥ sarasaphalabhṛto valkalinyaś ca
śākhāḥ
vīkṣyante yan mukhāni prasabham upagatapraśrayāṇāṁ khalānāṁ
duḥkhopāttālpavittasmayavaśapavanānārtitabhrūlatāni

182

Purge your delusion,
Find joy in moon-crested Śiva,
Dwell in devotion, my thoughts,
On the banks of the heavenly river!
What certainty exists in waves, or bubbles,
Or streaks of lightning?
In women, or flames, or serpents,
Or torrents of water?

183

Songs sound before you, eloquent bards,
From the south at your side,
Behind you are plume-bearing maids
Whose anklets ring in play . . .
If so you desire,
Taste these worldly delights.
If not, my mind, plunge into
Deep meditation, into a trance
Free from fancy's dilemmas.

184

Are roots extinct in the valleys?
Have mountain cascades ceased to fall?
Are boughs which bear sweet fruit, and yield
The hermit's bark, withered on the trees—
That the world thinks fit to behold
The faces of arrogant rogues
Whose brows dance superciliously in the winds
Of a little hard-won wealth?

185

ekākī niḥspṛhaḥ śāntaḥ
pāṇipātro digambaraḥ
kadā śaṁbho bhaviṣyāmi
karmanirmūlanakṣamaḥ

186

prāptāḥ śriyaḥ sakalakāmadughās tataḥ kiṁ
dattaṁ padaṁ śirasi vidviṣatāṁ tataḥ kim
sanmānitāḥ praṇayino vibhavais tataḥ kiṁ
kalpaṁ sthitaṁ tanubhṛtāṁ tanubhis tataḥ kim

187

bhaktir bhave maraṇajanmabhayaṁ hṛdistham
sneho na bandhuṣu na manmathajā vikārāḥ
saṁsargadoṣarahitā vijanā vanāntā
vairāgyam asti kim ataḥ param arthanīyam

185

O Beneficent Śiva,
Behold a solitary man,
Free from desire, tranquil,
Drinking from his hands,
Wearing the sky as his raiment.
When shall I master the way
To root out the store of my karma?

186

If wealth which yields all desire is won,
What then?
If your foot stands on the head of your foes,
What then?
If honored men are drawn to you by riches' force,
What then?
If man's mundane body endures for an aeon,
What then?

187

When man feels devotion to the Lord Śiva,
Has the fear in his heart of death and rebirth,
Indulges no bonds of attachment to kinsmen
Or frenzy born of amorous passion;
When he dwells in a lonely forest
Free from the taints of society,
He lives indifferent to worldly concerns.
What loftier goal can man strive to attain?

188

tasmād anantam ajaraṁ paramaṁ vikāsi
tad brahma vāñchata janā yadi cetanāsthāḥ
yasyānuṣaṅgiṇa ime bhuvanādhipatya-
bhogādayaḥ kṛpaṇalokamatā bhavanti

189

pātālam āviśasi yāsi nabho vilaṅghya
diṅmaṇḍalaṁ bhramasi mānasa cāpalena
bhrāntyāpi jātu vimalaṁ katham ātmanīnaṁ
tad brahma na smarasi nirvṛtim eṣi yena

190

mahīśayyā śayyā vipulam upadhānaṁ bhujalatā
vitānaṁ cākāśaṁ vyajanam anukūlo 'yam anilaḥ
sphuraddīpaś candro viratīvanitāsaṅgamuditaḥ
sukhaṁ śāntaḥ śete munir atanubhūtir nṛpa iva

188

If you men perceive your deeper selves,
Then reach toward Brahman, boundless,
Enduring, remote, and expansive;
And it shall follow that
Power and pleasure in the world
Will seem the obsessions of wretched fools.

189

You descend to nether worlds,
You traverse the sky,
You roam the horizon
With such mobility, my mind!
Why do you never, even in error,
Stumble on what is pure
And part of yourself,
That Brahman, through which
You would reach your final bliss?

190

Earth his soft couch,
Arms of creepers his pillow,
The sky his canopy,
Tender winds his fan,
The moon his brilliant lamp,
Indifference his mistress,
Detachment his joy—
Tranquil, the ash-besmeared hermit
Sleeps in ease like a king.

191

kiṁ vedaiḥ smṛtibhiḥ purāṇapaṭhanaiḥ śāstrair mahāvistaraiḥ
svargagrāmakuṭīnivāsaphaladaiḥ karmakriyāvibhramaiḥ
muktvaikaṁ bhavabhāraduḥkharacanāvidhvaṁsakālānalaṁ
svātmānandapadapraveśakalanaṁ śeṣā vaṇigvṛttayaḥ

192

āyuḥ kallolalolaṁ katipayadivasasthāyinī yauvanaśrīr
arthāḥ saṁkalpakalpā ghanasamayataḍidvibhramā
bhogapūrāḥ
kaṇṭhāśleṣopagūḍhaṁ tad api ca na ciraṁ yat priyābhiḥ praṇītaṁ
brahmaṇy āsaktacittā bhavata bhavabhayāmbhodhipāraṁ
tarītum

193

ramyāś candramarīcayas tṛṇavatī ramyā vanāntasthalī
ramyaṁ sādhusamāgamāgamasukhaṁ kāvyeṣu ramyāḥ kathāḥ
kopopāhitabāṣpabindutaralaṁ ramyaṁ priyāyā mukhaṁ
sarvaṁ ramyam anityatām upagate citte na kiṁcit punaḥ

191

What need have men with scriptures revealed, remembered,
Recited in legend? With tedious tomes of precepts?
With the labyrinth of ritual acts
Performed for reward in heaven's abode?
When compared with the fire ending time,
Ending all the pain of worldly toil,
And leading men's souls into bliss,
All these are the barter of haggling merchants.

192

Life is a rough uncertain wave.
The splendor of youth is a transient bloom.
Fortune is imagination's whim.
Pleasure flashes like lightning during the rains.
Even fond embraces of beloved arms
Do not rest long in their show of love.
Meditate then on that highest Brahman
To cross beyond this sea of worldly dread.

193

Moonlight beams, a forest glade,
The fellowship of friends,
The legends told in poetry,
All are enchanting.
Enchanting too is her lovely face
Gleaming with tears of anger;
Enchanting if only your thought can forget
Their ephemeral nature.

194

yāvat svastham idaṁ śarīram arujaṁ yāvaj jarā dūrato
yāvac cendriyaśaktir apratihatā yāvat kṣayo nāyuṣaḥ
ātmaśreyasi tāvad eva viduṣā kāryaḥ prayatno mahān
ādīpte bhavane tu kūpakhananaṁ pratyudyamaḥ kīdṛśaḥ

195

nābhyastā bhuvi vādivṛndadamanī vidyā vinītocitā
khaṅgāgraiḥ karikumbhapīṭhadalanair nākaṁ na nītaṁ yaśaḥ
kāntākomalapallavādhararasaḥ pīto na candrodaye
tāruṇyaṁ gatam eva niṣphalam aho śūnyālaye dīpavat

194

While his body's vigor is whole
And old age is remote;
While his sensuous powers are unimpaired
And life not yet exhausted;
Only then would a wise man
Strive to perfect his soul.
Why attempt to dig a well
When the house is already burning?

195

I failed to master the knowledge
Needed to conquer the host of polemists
Abroad in the world.
I did nothing to spread my fame
Across the sky on the rapier
Made to pierce martial elephants' heads.
I never sipped the moonrise nectar
From women's beautiful,
Tender, blossom lips.
Alas, I passed a futile youth,
Like a flaming lamp
In an empty house.

196

dhanyānāṁ girikandare nivasatāṁ jyotiḥ paraṁ dhyāyatām
ānandāśrujalaṁ pibanti śakunā niḥśaṅkam aṅkeśayāḥ
asmākaṁ tu manorathoparicitaprāsādavāpītaṭa-
krīḍākānanakelikautukajuṣām āyuḥ paraṁ kṣīyate

197

āghrātaṁ maraṇena janma jarayā yāty ujjvalaṁ yauvanaṁ
saṁtoṣo dhanalipsayā śamasukhaṁ prauḍhāṅganāvibhramaiḥ
lokair matsaribhir guṇā vanabhuvo vyālair nṛpā durjanair
asthairyeṇa vibhūtir apy apahṛtā grastaṁ na kiṁ kena vā

198

ādhivyādhiśatair vayasy atitarām ārogyam unmūlyate
lakṣmīr yatra patatrivac ca vivṛtadvārā iva vyāpadaḥ
jātaṁ jātam avaśyam āśu vivaśaṁ mṛtyuḥ karoty ātmasāt
tat kiṁ nāma nirāṅkuśena vidhinā yan nirmitaṁ susthiram

196

You are favored men who sit in mountain caves,
In meditation on an inner light;
While on your laps calmly perch śakuna birds
To drink the tears of bliss.
But we, poor fools,
Waste away our lives in games,
Dallying in pleasure groves and ponds
Of castles desire creates.

197

Birth is scented with death.
Youth's brilliance is shadowed by old age.
Contentment is menaced by ambition,
Calm, by impudent women's amorous looks,
Virtues, by men's malice,
Woodlands, by serpents, and kings, by villains.
Rich treasure
Is plundered by transience.
Is anything spared the threat of eclipse?

198

Youth in its prime is sapped
By a hundred plagues of longing.
Wherever the bird of wealth alights,
Misfortunes swarm through open gates.
Soon death is sovereign
Over every helpless creature born.
What is fashioned to endure
Through capricious fate?

199

kṛcchreṇāmedhyamadhye niyamitatanubhiḥ sthīyate
garbhamadhye
kāntāviśleṣaduḥkhavyatikaraviṣame yauvane viprayogaḥ
nārīṇām apy avajñāvilasitaniyataṁ vṛddhabhāvo 'py asādhuḥ
saṁsāre re manuṣyā vadata yadi sukhaṁ svalpam apy
asti kiṁcit

200

āyur varṣaśataṁ nṛṇāṁ parimitaṁ rātrau tadardhaṁ gataṁ
tasyārdhasya parasya cārdham aparaṁ bālatvavṛddhatvayoḥ
śeṣaṁ vyādhiviyogaduḥkhasahitaṁ sevādibhir nīyate
jīve vāritarañgacañcalatare saukhyaṁ kutaḥ prāṇinām

199

Still unborn, man suffers a painful
Confinement in woman's foul womb.
In youth, he suffers separation's pangs,
The misery of each parting
Love's embrace.
Even old age is accursed,
Exposing him to women
Flashing looks of scorn.
Tell me, you men, does worldly existence
Offer us any joy at all?

200

The span of man's life is a measured hundred years;
Yet half is lost to night
And of his waking time,
A portion each claim callow youth and hoary age;
His prime is spent in servitude, suffering
The anguish of estrangement and disease.
Where do men find happiness
In life less certain and more transient than the waves?

Glossary of Sanskrit Names and Terms in the Translation

Airāvaṇa The vehicle of the god Indra; an elephant who is considered the prototype of the elephant race (49).

Brahmā The creator-god of the Hindu triad of personal gods which includes also Viṣṇu and Śiva (8, 56, 68, 112, 115).

Brahman The absolute reality underlying the universe (6, 188, 189, 192).

Brihaspati "The lord of prayer" who is often Indra's ally in Vedic mythology (49).

Guru A religious teacher (163).

Haṁsa A wild goose, gander, or swan, mythologically reputed to be able to separate Soma and milk from water when these are mixed (38).

Indra The most prominent god in the *Rig Veda*, known for his heroic exploits, especially the slaying of the serpent demon Vṛtra (49, 118).

Kālī Time, as the goddess of death (171).

Kāma "Desire," "passion"; personified as Kāmadeva, "the god of love," who practices his magic to ensnare men. His common epithet is *makara-dhvaja* or *makara-ketana*, "having a sea-monster as his emblem" (98, 104, 105, 106, 112, 113, 114, 127).

Karma "Action"; especially the doctrine that a man's position in the present is the fruit of good or evil action done in the past (7, 22, 185).

Mt. Meru A fabulous mountain of Indian mythology which rises to heaven at the center of the world and is the home of the gods (48, 56).

Rāhu A demon king who causes eclipses. When the gods had churned the ocean to find the nectar of immortality, Rāhu disguised himself as one of them and drank a portion; but the Sun and Moon revealed the fraud to Viṣṇu, who cut off Rāhu's head and threw it into the stellar sphere. Since the nectar had already descended to his throat, only his body died; his head remained immortal. To gain revenge, Rāhu periodically swallows the sun and the moon (53).

Śakuna A bird of good omen (196).

Saṁsāra Bondage in the unending cycles of mundane existence through death and rebirth (74, 103).

Śeṣa A mythological thousand-headed serpent who supports the entire world on his hood (73).

Śiva The destructive, ascetic god of the Hindu triad; the patron of poets and ascetics; the god to whom Bhartrihari addresses his personal plea for salvation (1, 43, 112, 182, 185, 187).

Veda "Knowledge" especially "book of knowledge"; refers to the most sacred religious texts of Hinduism, consisting in the stricter sense of four books: *Rig Veda*, *Yajur Veda*, *Sāma Veda*, and *Atharva Veda*; in the broader sense it includes the collected ritual prose texts (Brāhmaṇas), forest books (Āraṇyakas), and philosophical treatises (Upaniṣads) (54, 72).

Viṣṇu — The preserver-god of the Hindu triad.

Yoga — "Discipline"; restraining the sense organs and the mind through the practice of certain disciplines. It may also refer (as it seems to in verse 178) to the union of the individual soul with the universal Soul.

Yogin (*Yogi*) — One who practices yoga (1).

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